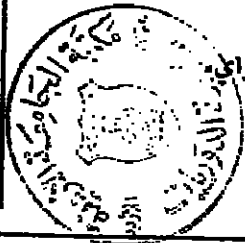


Arab League raps U.S. for doubting Syria

CAIRO (AFP) — The Arab League strongly criticised the United States on Monday for casting doubt on Syria's desire to make peace with Israel. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Friday he doubted whether Syrian President Hafez Al Assad could overcome his "fear and suspicion" of Israel to advance the peace process (See page 2). Arab League deputy chief, Muaffaq Al-Alfai, Syria's former head negotiator to talks with Israel, said the remarks were "designed to hide Washington's alignment with Israel during its aggression against Lebanon." Mr. Alfai told reporters he deployed the fact that the United States, "which is meant to be an honest co-sponsor of the peace process, is deforming the true position" of Syria. "Five years after the peace process was launched, how has Christopher suddenly discovered that Syria was not serious about making peace?" he asked, especially after the U.S. secretary stressing "dozens of times that he was convinced of President Assad's desire for peace."

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10 Palestinians shot in W. Bank protest

KALKILYA (AFP) — Ten Palestinians were shot and wounded Monday when Israeli soldiers opened fire with rubber bullets on 600 demonstrators protesting against land grabs on the West Bank, military sources said. The ten were taken to a Kalkilya hospital where their condition was described as satisfactory. Five more demonstrators inhaled tear-gas. Israeli troops fired rubber bullets and tear-gas to try to break up the demonstrators during nearly three hours of clashes. The Palestinians were protesting against confiscations of land by the army to build a security barrier between this part of the northern West Bank and Israel. They were trying to stop bulldozers from moving in to uproot orange trees and flatten the land.

2,000 militants living in Pakistan — Egypt

CAIRO (AFP) — Two thousand veterans of the Afghanistan conflict, accused by Egypt of being behind militant violence, are living in Pakistan, Egypt's ambassador to Islamabad said Monday. Numan Galal told the Arabic weekly Al Wasat that the veterans, 40 per cent of whom are Egyptians, are living mainly in Peshawar and near the Pakistani border with Afghanistan. Mr. Galal did not say whether they included militants wanted by Cairo but stressed that "some of them live under false names with forged passports." Pakistan denied his claims. Ahmad Sheikh, secretary general of the Pakistani Foreign Ministry, told Al Wasat that there were "dozens, not hundreds" of veterans in the country.

Iraq-Kuwait talks resumed

KUWAIT (AFP) — Talks between Iraq and Kuwait began on the border of the two countries on Monday aimed at determining the fate of more than 600 people, who Kuwait says, were taken prisoner or are still missing since the Gulf war, the official news agency KUNA said. Ibrahim Shaheen, vice-president of the National Committee for Prisoners of War and Missing Persons Affairs (NCMPA), is heading Kuwait's delegation which is pressing for information on files of 602 missing people, KUNA said. Iraq has said it will cooperate in the search for the missing people, many of whom were believed to have been imprisoned in the southern Iraqi town of Basra after Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, officials close to the talks said. However, many personal records were lost when the prisons were opened during the Shiite Muslim revolt in the south of Iraq which followed the Gulf war ending Iraq's seven-month occupation of Kuwait in February 1991, the officials said.

Khartoum blames pilot for air crash

KHARTOUM (R) — A plane which crashed near Khartoum on Saturday killing 53 people had been warned that the airport was closed because of bad weather, Aviation Minister Tigran Adam Al Tahir said in remarks published on Monday. But the owners of the plane, the private company Federal Airlines, said in a statement that the Antonov 24 had clearance to land at Khartoum airport and tried to do so eight times before it crashed in the northeastern suburb of Haj Yusef. "The civil aviation authorities warned the captain of the plane 20 minutes after takeoff that Khartoum airport was closed," Mr. Tahir told the government paper Al Iqtisad Al Watani. The plane, on a flight from the southern town of Wau, was the third to crash in Sudan this year.

Israel, PLO pledge to reach final peace

Initial session of final status talks ends at Taba; no date or venue announced for resumption

TABA (Agencies) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) concluded on Monday inaugural talks on a final peace settlement, still far apart on key issues but united in a commitment to end decades of conflict.

Both sides, peace partners since a historic interim deal in 1993, issued a joint communiqué after the largely symbolic session held under the shadow of May 29 Israeli elections that will put Prime Minister Shimon Peres' peace policy to the test.

"The two sides reaffirmed their determination to put an end to decades of confrontation and to live in peaceful coexistence, mutual dignity and security," the communiqué said after the talks which began on Sunday in Egypt's Red Sea resort of Taba.

Issuing its own statement, the militant Islamic group Hamas vowed in a leaflet sent to an international news organisation to continue its "holy struggle" against Israel until "occupation is removed and dignity and rights are achieved."

Hamas suicide bombers carried out four attacks in Israel in February and March that killed 59 people. Israeli leaders have said they feared more such bombings as elec-

tion day approaches.

In the Taba communiqué, Israel and the PLO said they sought a "just, durable and comprehensive peace settlement and historic reconciliation."

Negotiators acknowledged it would not be easy.

"We say that this beginning represents a new stage in the peace process. We are now negotiating on the main and sensitive issues which will determine in the end the success or failure of the peace negotiations," said PLO delegate Saeb Erekat.

"Naturally, they will be long and tedious negotiations. There is a huge rift in the positions of both sides on most issues," he told reporters.

These include the highly charged questions of Jerusalem, the fate of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees, the future of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza and the shape and status of a Palestinian entity.

The Taba communiqué "reconfirmed" the understanding of both sides that permanent status talks would lead to the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions.

But both sides have far different visions of what this will entail in areas seized by

Israel in the 1967 Middle East war.

In his opening speech on Sunday, Chief Palestinian negotiator Mahmoud Abbas, said the Palestinians wanted an independent state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Chief Israeli negotiator Uri Savir spoke of political separation between Israelis and Palestinians but insisted that East Jerusalem remain as part of Israel's "eternal" capital. "For us there is one issue that is eternal: Israel's united capital, Jerusalem," he said.

Mr. Peres, facing a tough reelection battle against right-wing rivals, dropped clauses in his Labour Party platform opposing a Palestinian state but still favours some sort of confederation between a Palestinian entity and Jordan.

Under the 1993 peace deal, Palestinians and Israelis have up to three years to reach a final accord.

In the meantime, the negotiators decided to form a steering committee of four to five representatives from each side to set the framework of the final status talks.

(Continued on page 7)



His Majesty King Hussein holds talks with French President Jacques Chirac in Paris on Monday (Reuters photo)

King, Chirac review Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan-France ties

French president to visit Jordan in September

PARIS (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein met in Paris on Monday with French President Jacques Chirac and told reporters later that the discussions with the French leader covered questions of mutual concern to Jordan and France, including the situations in Iraq and Lebanon.

"On Lebanon we discussed all important issues related to this country and our views are completely identical and our endeavours are the same to help Lebanon regain its sovereignty on all its land and preserve its unity and exercise its sovereignty over its territory and lead the life which we desire for its people," said King Hussein after the meeting.

"As to other topics, like bilateral relations and the peace process, we discussed peace, Euro-Arab relations, and other important issues," said the King.

The King said that he had extended an invitation to

President Chirac and preparations were under way for the visit, which will take place in September.

On Iraq he said: "We naturally discussed Iraq. As for us in Jordan we have one main concern: Lifting the suffering of the Iraqi people regardless of its source — whether it is internal or external — and to preserve Iraq's unity and its territorial sovereignty. We support all that helps Iraq to be a source of good and power for the Arab World and the region."

On France's role in the peace process, he said: "I believe that the U.S. and French roles complement each other. France has its own and historic interests in the region and so has Europe. This is natural and appreciated by all of us that all these efforts are exerted at this final phase."

Answering a question on Israeli elections he said: "I have had no any recent meetings... and as far as the

internal Israeli politics are concerned, I would rather not take any position or stand. I hope that Israel will continue seriously and honestly that all other parties in the area will move towards establishment of a comprehensive peace. I am not involved in the Israeli election campaign."

The King also met with French Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette and discussed the Middle East in general and the peace process in particular.

The French minister said his country, in cooperation with the European Union, will support the economies of the Middle East and finance development projects.

King Hussein had been on a private visit to London. He is due in Bonn Tuesday for talks with Chancellor Helmut Kohl, and Cairo Wednesday for a summit with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, international news agencies said.

Amateur video belies Israeli claims on Cana base attack

Syria, Lebanon reject U.S. plan for group to monitor ceasefire

Combined agency dispatches

AN AMATEUR video aired on Monday shows that, contrary to Israeli claims, repeated Israeli shelling hit a U.N. camp where at least 100 civilians died last month, and that an Israeli reconnaissance plane was in the area.

Lebanon and Syria meanwhile rejected a U.S. blueprint for a five-nation monitoring group to oversee a ceasefire that halted Israel's 10-day bombing offensive against Hizbollah guerrillas, officials said.

The Lebanese government officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the joint decision against the American proposals was reached in summit talks over the weekend between presidents Hafez Al Assad of Syria and Elias Hrawi of Lebanon in the Syrian port city of Latakia.

The monitoring group was part of the understanding recently mediated by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in a week of shuttle diplomacy in the Middle East to stop the Israel-Hizbollah war.

The accord stipulates that a committee be formed of representatives of the United States, France, Syria, Lebanon and Israel to monitor ceasefire violations on South Lebanon's border with northern Israel.

The question of the level of the representatives, the mechanism of the commit-

tee's operations, its powers and headquarters location were left for later contacts among the member nations through diplomatic channels.

One Lebanese official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the U.S. State Department had proposed the committee be formed on a cabinet-minister level with headquarters in Washington and the United States holding the chair.

He said Mr. Assad and Mr. Hrawi contend the U.S. proposals bestow on the group an unwarranted political stature that could replace the current framework for the peace talks on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks with Israel.

They both insist that the committee be formed of competent security officers from the five nations with preferable headquarters at the Lebanese border town of Naqoura, the command base of the U.N. peacekeeping force in the region, the official said.

Several thousand mourners gathered at Cana to lay wreaths on the mass grave of 102 people killed in the Israeli attack as Lebanon marked martyrs day.

The ceremony was held as Israel was set to formally deny to the United Nations that its artillery gunners knowingly shelled the camp on April 18, with its army arguing that an out-of-date map and miscalculations led to the tragedy.

Lebanon, which has declared April 18 an annual day of remembrance, commemorates martyrs day on May 6 in tribute to members of the press killed during the 1975-1990 civil war.

Many of the mourners had responded to a call issued by Deputy Habib Sadek, who also heads the Cultural Council for South Lebanon, for a day of remembrance at the hastily erected mass grave.

Mr. Sadek led a 70-car convoy from Beirut which swelled as it passed through Sidon and Tyre and brought to Cana in South Lebanon some 800 people. Another 1,000 came from northern Lebanon youth and cultural clubs.

Correspondents estimated the total number of mourners at 7,000 people as many more came by cars and buses from Beirut, Tripoli in the north, the southern ports of Sidon and Tyre and the Syrian-controlled Eastern Bekaa Valley.

They included Muslim and Christian clerics, deputies, cabinet ministers and relatives who had lost loved ones in the carnage.

Many carried portraits of the victims and visited a display of the first pictures of the attack taken by one of Cana's residents.

Israeli officials had maintained the camp was hit by only one or two stray rounds. And, until Sunday, they had

Bahrain bombings caused \$5 million in damage

MANAMA (Agencies) — Businesses here Monday cleaned up around \$5 million in damage caused by an unprecedented wave of bombings in Bahrain, amid calls for the "terrorists" to be punished without mercy.

Iain Reid, general manager at the Bahraini Norwich Union Insurance regional offices, said damage to his and eight other firms in Sunday's attacks was estimated at two million Bahraini dinars (\$5.3 million).

His office had to replace some computers damaged by smoke, employees said.

Several stores were gutted by fire, including a novelty shop next door to Bahraini Norwich, and a clothing store owned by the Sana company, which is owned by Indian businessmen.

The Bahraini authorities, who also put damages at millions of dollars, said the attacks were caused by cigarette packets filled with explosives and incendiary devices.

Mr. Reid said his company was damaged because it was next to the novelty shop and not because it was directly targeted.

Nobody was hurt in Sunday's attacks.

A Shiite Muslim died of wounds he sustained Saturday when police opened fire on an anti-government demonstration in a Bahraini village, his family said Monday.

Fadel Abbas Marhoon, 25, was heading back to his uncle's home in Karzakan, a village around 20 kilometres southwest of the capital Manama, when he was hit by a police bullet, a family member said.

"The police called us this morning to tell us he died and that he was buried," she said, adding that Marhoon was not involved in the demonstration that the police were trying to break up.

With the latest death, at least 22 people have died in anti-government unrest that has swept this archipelago for the past 17 months.

Policemen stood guard Monday outside each of the businesses and shops that were attacked as workers could be seen sweeping and mopping up the mess while the acrid smell of smoke lingered in the air.

A British businessman said the attacks on businesses undermined confidence in Bahrain, the Gulf's financial centre. "It's a problem that's not good for business confidence," he said.

An Indian jeweller said the recent wave of attacks was just another blow to business.

"Business has been bad for the past several months. Most of us have somehow been able to meet our commitments including staff salaries, rent and other payments," he said.

"Such bombings will undoubtedly have an impact on the faith of people. If such things continue, I may have to pack and go," he said.

Meanwhile, the Bahraini newspaper Akhbar Al Khaleej said the "terrorists" must be punished severely.

"We are facing a terrorist organisation which has adopted the horrible methods of terror and which is acting on instructions given by its leaders abroad," said the newspaper.

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Confidence crisis erupts between U.S. and Syria

DAMASCUS (AFP) — A crisis of confidence surfaced this weekend between the United States, the sponsor of the Middle East peace process, and Syria, one of its key players.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher expressed doubt over the capacity of Syrian President Hafez Al Assad to advance Syria's peace talks with Israel because of his "fear and suspicion," while Damascus questioned Washington's role as honest broker in the negotiations.

"A crisis of confidence has erupted between Damascus and Washington" because of Israel's operation Grapes of Wrath against Hizbollah guerrillas in Lebanon, a Western diplomat in the Syrian capital said.

The 16-day offensive, backed by the United States, affected "Washington's credibility with Syria, because of the blatant American bias in favour of Israel," he added.

Syria, which deploys 35,000 troops in Lebanon where it has a strong influence, played a pivotal role in diplomatic efforts to negotiate the ceasefire which went into effect on April 27.

Its ruling coalition, the National Progressive Front headed by Mr. Assad, issued a statement late Sunday saying Washington's support for Israel "contradicted its role as the main sponsor of peace."

The official Syrian newspaper Al Thawra made the same charge. "America's new support for Israel does not exactly correspond to its role of impartial and honest broker," it said.

"How can the United States fill this role while it is giving Israel military, political and diplomatic support? This attitude is casting a shadow over the credibility of U.S. policy" in the Middle East, the newspaper added.

The government daily Tishrin, meanwhile, said Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres had been "handsomely rewarded" with a series of military cooperation

agreements with Washington while "the blood of the Cana martyrs is still fresh."

Tishrin was referring to the 102 refugees killed when Israeli shells hit a U.N. base in Cana in South Lebanon.

"These cooperation agreements help defend Israel's terrorist policies and allow it to use U.S. security services to commit more terrorist acts," the paper added.

The United States co-sponsors with Russia the Arab-Israeli peace process. The last round of negotiations between Israel and Syria, which the Jewish state froze in February following a spate of suicide bombings, was held outside Washington.

The ceasefire accord between Israel and Hizbollah called for a resumption of Israel's peace talks with Syria and Lebanon, expected to begin after May 29 general elections in the Jewish state.

But Mr. Christopher, who visited Damascus several times as part of his efforts to broker the accord, on Friday expressed doubts over Mr. Assad's ability to move the peace process forward.

"I am more concerned than ever as to whether he will be able to execute his intention (for peace) because of his suspicion and fear," Mr. Christopher said in an interview with the Los Angeles Times.

He said the Syrian president was constantly afraid that Israel would outmanoeuvre him in the search for an elusive peace deal.

Tishrin newspaper fired back Sunday that Syria should not carry the blame for the gloomy outlook for peace.

"President Assad's faith in a just peace is unshakable, despite Shimon Peres' actions which raise questions about his desire for peace," it said.

The Western diplomat in Damascus said the atmosphere of mistrust between Syria and the United States and Israel "does not augur well for the negotiations."

The fact that the U.S. State Department kept Syria on its list of countries supporting

terrorism has not helped matters, he said.

Israeli-Syrian talks have made little progress since they were first launched in 1991, with the main stumbling block being the future of the Golan Heights.

Israel, which seized the Golan in 1967, has refused to commit itself to a total withdrawal from the strategic heights as demanded by Syria.

Reuters adds: Its statement that Israel's bombardment of Lebanon showed that Israel did not care about the peace process.

"The coalition found that the U.S. administration's position regarding the Israeli aggression contradicted its role as a basic sponsor of the peace process in the region," the statement said.

The statement was issued at the end of a meeting headed by Vice-President Zuheir Masharqa on the latest Arab and regional developments.

"The Israeli aggressive actions against Lebanon constitute a disregard to values and international conventions. They confirm that the Israeli government does not give the peace process any serious interest," the statement said.

The Tishrin daily condemned the United States' "bias" towards Israel and warned Washington that it would face trouble in the region if it continued such policies.

"We really wished the U.S. secretary of state had not issued statements and promoted ideas which portray a grim picture of that," Tishrin said.

"Such a step would encourage Israel to be more obstinate and to refuse to commit itself to the requirements of just and comprehensive peace."

Tishrin said Washington should learn from Israel's failure to crush Hizbollah guerrillas during its blitz of Lebanon.

It also said Washington's pro-Israeli policy "had created big circles of doubt over U.S. credibility."

Sharon says Likud cannot accept accords with PLO

TEL AVIV (AP) — Ariel Sharon, one of the most powerful figures in the opposition Likud party, said Monday that his party must not accept the Israeli-Palestinian autonomy agreements.

Mr. Sharon's declaration was in sharp contrast to the line taken by Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu who, in a move to win over centrist voters, has said he accepted the facts created by the peace agreements and would consider meeting with Yasser Arafat.

Mr. Sharon, a former defence minister, told the Associated Press on Monday that if Likud accepted the autonomy accords, it would tie the party's hand should it win the May 29 elections.

"If we did (accept the agreements) and we win the election, we will have to continue along these lines," Mr. Sharon said in a telephone interview. "If we remain in the opposition, we would be unable to fight this dangerous programme."

Mr. Netanyahu is heavily indebted to Mr. Sharon who removed two challengers from the race for prime minister by negotiating agreements under which their parties joined the Likud slate.

Other leading Likud figures, including legislator Benny Begin, have also said they opposed the peace agreements with the Palestinians. Mr. Begin recently wrote that any party that backed the autonomy accords was unfit to govern.

Israel's Yediot Achronot daily said Monday that in another bid to appeal to floating voters, Mr. Netanyahu plans to propose governing jointly with Prime Minister Shimon Peres' Labour Party if it emerges a few days before the election that the race is close.

Such a bid would reassure centrist voters who are concerned by the hawkish image of Mr. Sharon and other figures in Mr. Netanyahu's leadership team, such as retired General Rafael Eitan, Yediot said.

5 killed in hostage shootout in Algiers

ALGIERS (AP) — At least four militants and a government security force member were killed early Monday in a clash after the radicals took hostages.

The bloody clash occurred just hours after President Liamine Zerrouk, trying to ease a four-year insurgency that has killed 40,000 people, promised to hold legislative elections in 1997.

The standoff began Saturday night, when extremists took an unknown number of people hostage in a six-floor apartment building in Said Hamdine on the outskirts of the capital, Algiers.

The extremists — eight men and a woman — then barricaded themselves in a fourth-floor apartment, answering officials' demands for the release of the hostages with bursts of machine-gun fire.

Four militants and a security force member were killed in an ensuing clash sometime over-night Sunday. Details of the clash were sketchy Monday.

Algerian press reports Monday differed in their accounts of the standoff. Some reports said the armed group was the personal security detail of Djamel Zitouni, a leader of the Armed Islamic Group, the most extremist of Algeria's armed factions.

Other reports said some of the militants were the same ones suspected in Saturday's assassination of former Interior Minister Mohammad Hardi in Oued Smar, a southern suburb of Algiers.

Hardi was the second former interior minister to die in nine months. In September, gunmen shot to death Abu Bakr Belkaid in a bustling quarter of Algiers.

Egypt expects Israel to get rid of nuclear arms

CAIRO (AFP) — Israel is expected to get rid of its nuclear arsenal in the near future, an Egyptian official said in remarks published Monday.

"I expect the Israeli nuclear programme to be eliminated soon," said Osama Al Baz, political advisor to President Hosni Mubarak.

Dr. Baz, quoted by government daily Al Massa, said an unnamed Israeli official told him that "any resort to nuclear weapons by Israel against its neighbours would amount to suicide" because the Jewish state too would be affected by radiation.

The Israeli official also told him that his country's nuclear programme was temporary. Dr. Baz said in a speech to students at Assiut University. "It is intended as a deterrent up to a certain point, and to

quell the anger of extremists in Israel."

He added that Egypt would continue its drive to rid the Middle East of nuclear weapons. "The simple act of stockpiling nuclear arms in the region poses a threat to its (Israel's) security."

Egypt spearheaded a campaign last year to try to pressure Israel into joining the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. But the Jewish state, which has never confirmed Western reports it has up to 200 nuclear warheads, refused on the grounds that its existence is threatened by enemies such as Iran.

Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres has hinted that Israel will dismantle its nuclear potential once a comprehensive peace is achieved in the Middle East.

Barbie dolls under fire from Islamic hardliners

TEHRAN (AFP) — A new danger is sweeping Iran in the shape of Barbie, the curvy, plastic all-American toy beloved of little girls across the world, whose growing popularity here has led her to being dubbed the "Satanic doll" by Islamic hardliners.

Blonde or brunette, in evening dress or swimming costume, even pregnant, Barbies in all shapes have invaded toy shop windows in Tehran and other major cities, sparking a wave of alarm.

Sobh, a magazine run by Islamic hardliners, protested last week: "The unwholesome flexibility of these dolls, their destructive beauty and their semi-nudity have an effect on the minds and morality of young children."

These toys "are the perfect representation of the Satanic and perverse culture" of the West and their "omnipresence on the Iranian market is a marked sign of the growing invasion and influence of Western culture."

Barbie dolls "attack children's minds without them being able to put up the slightest defence" and "spread models of Western women" among Islamic society, the magazine said.

It also warned parents about children's increasing infatuation towards the obligatory Islamic dress for women here of a headscarf and long dark dress, or the black chador which covers

the whole body. Under the strict dress code, women's hair must be covered and her loose fitting dress must cover her to her wrists and almost to the ankles.

Importing toys is strictly forbidden in Iran and all products "Made in the USA" are theoretically supposed to have disappeared from the Iranian market because of the U.S. economic embargo imposed on the country.

But Barbies are smuggled in through more or less legal routes, seemingly without much difficulty. Most arrive via the free zones on the islands of Kish and Qeshm in the Gulf.

Security forces, tasked with fighting smuggling and impounding all goods deemed unfit according to Islamic codes, have not so far been given any orders to move against Barbie dolls.

And despite a severe economic crisis which has hit Iranian homes in the past three years, Barbies are selling for outrageous prices of between 300,000 rials (\$85) and a million rials (\$250).

Buyers are not deterred by the cost though, toy-sellers said, adding that the dolls were "among the most-sold toys."

"At the beginning it was the rich families that were buying Barbies, but now everybody wants to buy these little dolls," said one toy-shop owner in northern Tehran.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Algeria ties up links with Israel to peace

PARIS (R) — Algerian President Liamine Zerrouk said on Sunday that ties between Algeria and Israel depended on progress in the Middle East peace process. In a news conference in Algiers, Mr. Zerrouk referred to stalled negotiations between Israel and Syria, Israel's 17-day bombardment of Lebanon and the Palestinian issue. "When these questions will be resolved, Algeria will rule on its position towards Israel," he said in remarks quoted by the official Algerian news agency APS. Algeria took part in the "peacekeepers" summit in Egypt this year co-hosted by the United States and Egypt, during which participants expressed their support for the Middle East peace process and condemned acts of terrorism. Algeria's neighbours Morocco and Tunisia have low level diplomatic relations with the Israeli government.

N. Korean minister ends Libya visit

TRIPOLI (AFP) — North Korean Foreign Minister Kim Yong-Nam left Libya on Sunday, ending a five-day visit designed to strengthen bilateral relations, the official JANA news agency reported. Mr. Kim indicated before his departure that his talks had dealt with reinforcing ties between Pyongyang and Tripoli, which share antagonism towards the United States. He reiterated "North Korea's support for the Libyan people in their courageous struggle against all imperialist and colonial plots" — a reference to international sanctions against Libya, imposed in 1992, for its alleged support of terrorism. Libya and North Korea figure on the U.S. State Department list of countries suspected of backing terrorists. Others are Syria, Iran, Cuba, Iraq and Sudan.

Yemen to be connected to Internet

SANAA (AFP) — Yemen, one of the world's poorest countries, is to be connected to the Internet from July, officials said Sunday. The network, to be called YemenNet, will be set up with the help of the British company NASS, which signed an accord with Yemen's international communications firm Tel Yemen on Sunday to provide equipment and programmes.

Israel to launch Arabic TV channel

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel's Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni announced Sunday the creation of a television station that will broadcast exclusively in Arabic. The cable station will begin broadcasting to Israel's 800,000-strong Arab community in January and will be funded by advertising revenues. Ms. Aloni said. She launched an appeal for shareholders in the new station, specifying that at least 25 per cent of candidates must be Israeli Arabs or Druze. The announcement comes as Prime Minister Shimon Peres steps up efforts to woo the Arab Israeli vote three weeks ahead of Israel's general election. Israel has two large television stations, one public and one private, as well as a cable station and several local channels. The state-owned channel broadcasts in Arabic for one hour every day.

Majlis withdraws public smoking ban

TEHRAN (R) — Iran's parliament (Majlis) on Sunday withdrew a law it passed banning smoking in public places because of opposition from the Guardian Council. The Guardian Council, which vets parliament decisions before they take effect, ruled the law was unconstitutional because it would cut government revenues by banning the sale or purchase of cigarettes without finding a replacement source of income. Parliament last week approved the ban on smoking in public places and introduced a cash penalty for violators. There are about five million smokers — who consume 150 million cigarettes a day — out of Iran's 60 million people. In 1992, the Guardian Council blocked a bill passed by the parliament to phase out import and sale of cigarettes over seven years because it did not envisage substitute sources of revenue for the lost tobacco tax. Since then, the Iranian government has banned smoking in places such as hospitals, cinemas, domestic airlines flights, buses and the health ministry.

Turkey to push for full WEU membership

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkey's Foreign Minister Emre Gonenay said on Monday he would push for the country's full membership of the Western European Union (WEU) at the Group's meeting this week in Birmingham, Anatolian News Agency reported. "We will make efforts for full membership of the western European Union," Mr. Gonenay told journalists ahead of his departure from Istanbul airport for Britain. WEU foreign and defence ministers will hold a day-long meeting on Tuesday in Birmingham. "Turkey not being a member of WEU is causing problems in Ankara," the agency quoted Mr. Gonenay as saying, noting that Turkey sent soldiers to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Somalia and takes part in NATO operations.

Iraq says car accidents reduced

BAGHDAD (R) — Traffic accidents in Iraq have sharply dropped but car theft has been on the rise since 1991, the government newspaper Al-Jumhuriya said on Monday. It said car accidents killed 1,722 people in 1995 down from 2,600 in 1991. The number of those injured in such accidents also slipped from 9,198 in 1991 to 4,118 in 1995. Traffic policemen attributed the decline to the expansion of traffic light systems in Iraq, the newspaper added. Mr. Jumhuriya said 3,126 vehicles were stolen in Iraq since the imposition of sanctions until end of March 1996. Car theft was almost non-existent in Iraq prior to U.N. trade sanctions.

Afghanistan and Pakistan open talks on improved ties

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Talks between two uneasy neighbours opened Monday in Islamabad after almost nine months after a mob ransacked Pakistan's embassy in the Afghan capital of Kabul, killing one person and badly beating several others, including the ambassador.

The talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan follow a formal apology from President Burhanuddin Rabbani's government in Kabul and a promise to compensate Pakistan.

"I think the agenda is fairly public. It's going to be both compensation and the possibility of a road link," said Gul Hanif, a spokesman for Pakistan's Foreign Ministry. Last September a mob of several thousand people completely destroyed the grey stone buildings of the Pakistan embassy set on a sprawling estate smack in the middle of Kabul.

As they wielded their clubs and their burning torches, the mob chanted slogans accus-

ing Pakistan on supporting Mr. Rabbani's biggest rival, the Taliban, an army of former seminarians turned guerrilla fighters.

Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan, which is mired in a bitter civil war that has gone on for four years, soured shortly after the Taliban entered the fray in 1994.

Mr. Rabbani, whose soldiers control the capital of Kabul, accuse Pakistan of arming and training the Taliban. Pakistan has denied the charge although there are many in the administration who sympathise with them.

About 5,000 Taliban soldiers are deployed on the outskirts of Kabul and daily they lob rockets into the city. They are demanding Mr. Rabbani's resignation, something the president has refused saying he would not step down until a broad-based government has been formed to take power.

The establishment of such a government seems unlikely anytime soon given that none

of the warring factions has so far agreed to sit at the negotiation table.

Since throwing out the communists from Kabul in 1992 Afghanistan's guerrillas have been fighting each other for power.

At least 70 per cent of the capital has been turned into a wasteland of bombed out buildings and landmine-infested ruins.

Humanitarian aid groups estimate more than 25,000 people — mostly civilians — have been killed in the past four years and nearly half the pre-war population of 1.5 million people have fled the city.

Once the staging arena for Afghanistan's anti-communist insurgency against invading Russian troops, Pakistan took in about five million Afghan refugees after 1979.

About 1.5 million still live in Pakistan in substandard mud homes in refugee camps in the frontier province that borders Afghanistan. Many are too afraid to go home.

JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME TWO
15:00 — Captain Planet
15:25 — The Happy Professor
15:40 — Scientific Eve
16:00 — Alf
16:30 — The Bomb Morrison Show
17:00 — News Flash
17:42 — Ordy
17:15 — Magazine — La Vie Devant Moi
17:30 — Scie — Le Plus Petit Que Soit
18:00 — Magazine — Savoir Plus Savoir
18:00 — Magazine — Le Journal
19:15 — Magazine — Ushuaia
19:30 — News Headlines
19:35 — Encounter
20:00 — Comedy — Home Improvement
20:30 — Doc — Life in the Freezer
21:00 — Varieties
21:10 — Star Trek
22:00 — News in English
22:25 — The Bold and the Beautiful
23:10 — Feature film: "Operation Cobra"

PRAYER TIMES

04:14 — Fajr
05:40 — (Sunrise) Dhuha
12:32 — Dhuhr
16:12 — Asr
19:24 — Maghrib
20:51 — Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish, Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 63785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624990
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 63785
De La Salle Church Tel. 601757
Terza Santa Church Tel. 623360
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623411
Anglican Church Tel. 652526
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 713331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 713261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 717551
Assiout International Church Tel. 652526
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
Tel. 811285
English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Khamasini weather conditions will prevail so it will be hot, dry, and dusty with clouds appearing at different altitudes. In Amman, it will be hot, wind northerly moderate, and seas calm.
Min/Max temp.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

AMMAN: 16:34
Aqaba: 20:39
Dera: 15:36
Jordan Valley: 19:37
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 33, Aqaba 28, Humidity readings: Amman 22 per cent, Aqaba 22 per cent.
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS
NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN: 815615
Dr. Afif Shukri 815615
Dr. Said Tawfiq 815615
Dr. Hanna Mansour 815615
Dr. Nidal Al-Dabbab 815615
Ferdous pharmacy 815615
Al Asma pharmacy 815615
Naroukh pharmacy 815615
Al Salem pharmacy 815615
Yasoud pharmacy 815615
Shmoukhi pharmacy 815615
Naroukh pharmacy 815615
Najib pharmacy 815615
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 863970
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 781111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Al Hikma Modern Hospital 661101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 62101
Jordan Television 774111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 630100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 06-53200

HOSPITALS

ADMAN: Hussein Medical Centre 81313332
Khaldi Medicality, J. Amn 6442816
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn 6424412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

RENAISSANCE

Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmoukhi 607071
Shmoukhi Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muhsin Hospital 667277
The Islamic, Abdali 66617737
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajir 77101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashraf 77111/23
Army, Marfa 89161115
Queen Alia Hospital 666100
Amal Hospital 607155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA: Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983322
Zarqa National Hospital (09)905560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)90990
IBRD: Princess Beama Hospital (02)272555
Geok Catholic Hospital (02)272735
The Al Nadeem Hospital (02)247100
AQABA: Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

ROYAL JORDANIAN (RJ) FLIGHTS

(Terminal 1)
04:00 — Jeddah (add) (RJ)
06:30 — Damascus (RJ)
09:15 — Jeddah (add) (RJ)
10:25 — Abu Dhabi (RJ)
11:05 — Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
11:05 — Beirut (RJ)
11:15 — Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
16:30 — Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
17:20 — Cairo (RJ)
17:20 — London (RJ)
17:20 — Frankfurt (RJ)
18:15 — Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
23:20 — Paris (add) (RJ)
01:30 — Brussels (add) (RJ)
02:45 — Jeddah (add) (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
14:10 — Frankfurt (YP)
15:25 — Rome (AZ)
15:35 — Munich (YP)
19:00 — Dubai, Damascus (EK)
20:00 — Amsterdam (KL)
21:00 — Aden (DY)
21:10 — Beirut (ME)
20:55 — Bucharest (RO)
02:50 — London (RJ)
02:50 — Kuwait (KL)

ROYAL WINGS (RW) FLIGHTS

09:20 — Aqaba (RW)
10:40 — Amman QALIA (arrives at Marfa at Airport at 10:20) (RW)
19:45 — Tel Aviv (OIA) (RW)
DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
04:00 — Jeddah (add) (RJ)
07:15 — Beirut (RJ)
09:45 — Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:00 — Casablanca, Madrid (RJ)
12:05 — Amsterdam, Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
12:10 — Aqaba, Paris (RJ)
12:30 — Agaba, Vienna (RW)
12:45 — Geneva, Frankfurt (RJ)
13:15 — Geneva, Brussels (RJ)
14:05 — London (RJ)
14:05 — Damascus, Larnaca (RJ)
21:30 — Jeddah (RJ)
22:05 — Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:30 — Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
01:30 — Jeddah (add) (RJ)
01:30 — Jeddah (add) (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
09:15 — London (RJ)
10:10 — Frankfurt (YP)
16:25 — Rome (AZ)
16:45 — Munich (YP)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apple 700/500
Banana 600/400
Banana (Mukammal) 520/350
Banana (imported) 650/600
Carrot 100/60
Cauliflower 200/180
Cucumbers (small) 180/100
Eggplant 210/130
Fava beans 280/180
Garlic 550/350
Garlic (green) 400/300
Lemon 600/400
Marrow (large) 180/120
Marrow (small) 260/180
Mushrooms 230/130
Onion (dry) 180/100
Orange 200/130
Peanut 250/150
Pepper (hot) 280/180
Pepper (sweet) 280/180
Potato 160/100
String Beans 450/280
Tomato 250/130



Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb Monday leads the Jordanian side for talks with an Egyptian delegation headed by Egypt's Minister of Economy and International Cooperation Nawal Tatawi to prepare for a meeting of the Higher Jordanian-Egyptian Committee to open today (Petra photo)

Jordan, Egypt call for closer economic, trade cooperation

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan and Egypt Monday opened talks at the ministerial level to prepare for a meeting today of the Higher Jordanian-Egyptian Committee and agreed that both countries should work towards closer economic ties.

Today's meeting is to be chaired by the prime ministers of the two countries, Abdul Karim Kabariti and Kamal Jazouli, who will decide on cooperative plans mainly in economic and trade fields.

Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb who Monday led the Jordanian side to the preparatory meeting and Nawal Tatawi, Egypt's minister of economy and international cooperation, both underlined the need for the two countries to pursue closer cooperation and to give their private sectors wider roles to help increase investments

and carry out joint ventures.

"As we enter a new era marked by major world economic challenges and partnership with Europe, it is incumbent on the two countries to reach agreements on increased trade and economic cooperation," said Mr. Abul Ragheb.

He said that the private sector in Jordan and Egypt is now assuming a greater role in joint projects but such cooperation will be boosted once the two countries have signed an agreement on free trade zones, preventing dual taxation and encouraging joint investments.

Dr. Tatawi said the Tuesday meeting will pave the ground for further economic agreements and will review progress on the joint projects which the two countries are currently

implementing.

Creation of free trade zones and joint projects in tourism, education, land, maritime and air transport and electric power linkage are among the main topics on the joint committee's agenda.

High level delegations from both countries Saturday held discussions at the Ministry of Industry and Trade to lay the foundation for the joint committee meeting and said in a statement later that the two sides were aiming to remove all barriers to trade and the flow of capital and joint investments.

Ministry sources said last year's trade statistics showed that Egypt bought \$30 million worth of Jordanian products and exported \$120 million worth of Egyptian products to the Kingdom.



Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Monday addresses a session on water harvesting at the University of Jordan (Petra photo)

Water harvesting is key to badia region development — Kabariti

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Monday told scientists that the government is determined to develop the Jordanian badia region and has national plans to make available sufficient water resources for this project through the process of water harvesting.

Addressing the opening session of a scientific day held at the University of Jordan under the title: Water Harvesting and its Role in Developing Vegetation in the Jordanian Badia Region, the prime minister said the concerned authorities are expected to draw up a clear and applicable strategy to ensure sustainable development of this region.

For its part the Ministry of Agriculture has just drawn up an agricultural plan aimed at halting the deterioration of the pasture lands in the badia region and combating desertification and improving social and economic conditions of the badia inhabitants said Mr. Kabariti. He added that the ministry is working in cooperation with the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Develop-

ment to fight off desertification.

In addition the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) is currently conducting a pilot project in the desert region of Safawi with the aim of implementing a comprehensive development programme there, said Mr. Kabariti.

The Jordanian badia region is important not only for its potential for agricultural development in the coming decades but also because it holds most of Jordan's underground mineral resources, he added.

What the government hopes to achieve, he said is to enable the badia region to attract rather than drive away inhabitants and thus is pursuing intensive field studies towards that goal.

He said the government seeks to utilise the country's resources in the most beneficial and economic manner to ensure sustainable development for future generations and is keen on achieving an ecological balance and increasing the area of green

lands to extend to and cover the badia regions.

Abdul Latif Arabiyat, president of the Jordanian Society for Desertification Control and Badia Development, which organised the meeting in cooperation with the Water and Environmental Research and Study Centre at the University of Jordan, told the session that the meeting will discuss ways for water harvesting in the dry regions where rainfall is less than 200 millimetres annually and which accounts for nearly 82 per cent of the total area of the Kingdom.

He said that his non-governmental society is looking for ways to increase vegetation in the badia region and to spread public awareness about the importance of fighting off desertification.

University of Jordan President Fawzi Ghareibeh said the university was cooperating with Canadian universities and with funding from the Canadian government in research projects to promote water harvesting in Jordan.

Regent, visiting Qatari minister review cooperation in judicial systems

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Monday met at the Royal Court with visiting Qatari Minister of Justice Najib Nueimi and discussed with him Jordanian-Qatari relations, stressing the need for the two countries to maintain a good level of cooperation in promoting their judicial systems.

The Regent said that the two countries will benefit from mutual consultations and exchange of views among their judicial institutions in modernising legislation and also from their respective experiences.

Prince Hassan listened to a briefing by Dr. Nueimi and his Jordanian counterpart Abdul Karim Dughmi, who was present at the meeting, on the outcome of their discussions on promoting cooperation in judicial affairs, and upgrading legislation and regulations in their respective justice

systems.

Following the meeting Dr. Nueimi said he conveyed to the Regent greetings from the Emir of Qatar.

Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, who earlier received the Qatari minister and reviewed similar issues, said that Jordan appreciates Qatar's continued support for Jordan and the Arab causes and its endeavours to promote pan-Arab relations.

Dr. Nueimi said later that he discussed with Mr. Kabariti the question of Arab Jerusalem and issues of common concern to Qatar and Jordan.

The Prime Minister accompanied Dr. Nueimi and his delegation to the Public Security Department's criminal laboratories and its narcotics department and the two officials met with PSD Director Nasouh Muheid-



HRH Prince Hassan Monday meets with visiting Qatari Minister of Justice Najib Nueimi. Both sides discussed ways to enhance Jordanian-Qatari cooperation in promoting their judicial systems (photo by Boghos)

din and his assistants who briefed them on the work of each section particularly

on measures to combat drug trafficking.

Qatari Ambassador to Jordan Nasser Al Nasser accompanied Dr. Nueimi to Monday's meetings.

Bay'at Al Imam defence team asks court to speed up trial

Prosecutor general decides on double trial in case involving shooting of French envoy

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Seven attorneys defending 13 people accused of subversion Monday asked the court to speed up the trial of their defendants, which began last September, to "insure justice for their clients."

Attorney Mohammad Hantoush, speaking on behalf of the other six defence lawyers, also informed the court that the Jordan Bar Association-appointed attorneys met with their clients and are preparing their defence statements.

The defendants, known by their group affiliation names as Bay'at Al Imam (pledge of allegiance), are charged with slandering against His Majesty King Hussein and illegal possession and manufacture of explosive materials.

For the past nine months, the group's trial has been postponed indefinitely because the defendants would not cooperate with their appointed lawyers and had disrupted several court sessions.

Some of the defendants, who were repeatedly

expelled from the courtroom, had rejected the appointment of attorneys charging that they did not believe in the court's justice system.

In other development in the case, Presiding Judge Hafez Amin set free six of the 13 defendants, before the holiday of Eid Al Adha, after their attorneys requested that their clients be released on bail.

The six defendants, freed before the Eid are accused only of slandering King Hussein. They are: Nabil Mohammad Abu Hafieh, Sharif Ibrahim Abdul Fatah, Ahmad Abdullah Yousef, Mohammad Abdul Karim Ahmad, Mohammad Fakhri Mousa and Ala' Edin Atef Sa'dat.

The attorneys also asked the court to give them time to present their defence statements.

Judge Amin agreed to the defence's request and set May 19 as the date to resume the case.

Meanwhile, the Court of Cassation recently approved a request by the State Security prosecutor general to split the trial of two Jordanians involved in an attack on a French diplo-

mat in February 1995.

According to the higher court, Salem Abdullah Jaradat and Ahmad Qassem, both 22, will stand trial at the Criminal Court on charges of the attempted murder of French envoy Gil Hein in February 1995 in Wadi Mujib.

At the same time, the suspects will be tried at the State Security Court on sabotage charges.

The defendants' attorney, Saleh Armouti, had asked the State Security Court that his clients be tried on charges of both sabotage and attempted murder in either the State Security Court or the Criminal Court but not in separate courts on separate charges as is being acted by the state prosecutor.

State Security prosecutor general Mohammad Obeidat, on the other hand, demanded that the case be tried in two separate courts stating that attempted murder charge was not within his court's jurisdiction.

Judge Amin set May 13 to start hearing the case. No date was set by the Criminal Court to start hearing the case of attempted murder.

Prince Raad: Rehabilitation of handicapped moves from theory to practice

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Prince Raad Ben Zeid, the Chief Chamberlain, Monday opened a four-day regional meeting on rehabilitation of the handicapped and told participants from 14 countries that Jordan has moved from the stage of academic theory to practice and application in the drive to rehabilitate the handicapped.

"We feel that it is our duty to serve the needs of the handicapped in order to integrate them in the society and we have initiated several projects to help achieve that goal including one that covers 12 villages in Mafraq Governorate," said Prince Raad.

He said a Jordanian law on caring for the handicapped has contributed towards enhancing this concept among the public and has given added momentum to cooperation between organisations from Jordan and other countries towards caring for the handicapped.

The Al Hussein Society for the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped has been cooper-

ating with the Jordanian-Swedish Medical Organisation, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in this area, added Prince Raad.

He voiced Jordan's appreciation of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Arab Labour Organisation (ALO), both of which organised the meeting in Amman "at which the participating experts can exchange views and ideas on ways to better serve the handicapped and promoting their rehabilitation."

"We seek constructive dialogue through this meeting to reach common concepts benefiting the handicapped who we regard and deal with as humans and not as mute instruments," stressed the Prince.

Delegates taking part in the meeting came from Syria, Egypt, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Tunisia, Morocco, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Lebanon, Sudan, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as well as Jordan.

Women seek to form network to secure more parliamentary seats in '97

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Women activists Sunday agreed to form a network of women's organisations to prepare for the 1997 parliamentary elections and work on establishing pressure groups and concentrating on the women's quota issue to ensure what they see as suitable and sufficient representation of women in the parliament.

"We have to start somewhere and we need to encourage and support women to run for the 1997 elections," Khadijeh Habashneh, a women's activist told a gathering of former candidates, lawyers, political party and women's organisations representatives.

Ms. Habashneh said efforts should be geared towards changing the current elections law.

"If there is no law that

supports women when they run for elections, women will never succeed because the society still perceives women in a different light," she said adding that efforts should be exerted to amend the current law to ensure fair representation of women in the Lower House before the draft law is passed.

Minister of Information Marwan Muasher said recently that the Ministry of Interior will prepare a new election law that will insure the rights of all Jordanians to fair and free elections, and will put it forward for a national debate.

Women's activists stress that the current one-person, one-vote system is discriminatory and backwards, that it strengthens tribalism and contradicts civil rights and national affiliations.

Women's activist Asma Khader told the meeting

attendees that the proposed women's organisations network should also focus on the popular base, stressing the need for special programmes to hear-out women's opinions and concerns.

It is also important to examine the reasons that led to women's failure in previous elections and study their experience "so we will not fail in future elections," said Ms. Khader, an attorney.

"Our mission will be tough since there has been accumulating and organised movements since 1989 in which many parties were able to guarantee seats for their candidates, and we have to work harder this year and next year," Ms. Khader asserted.

In the 1989 elections the 12 women candidates for House seats all failed to reach the parliament. These results, according to observers, led to only three women running for

elections in 1993 in which one woman, Toujan Faisal, garnered enough votes to secure a seat in the Lower House.

Eida Mutlaq, who ran in the 1989 elections, pointed out that the women's network to be formed should also take into consideration "the political division among the public after the signing of the peace treaty (with Israel) in October 1994."

"The signing of the peace treaty created an earthquake which divided people into two camps — with and against the peace treaty — and this will play a major role in the upcoming elections," according to Ms. Mutlaq.

She said women running for the 1997 elections should organise themselves and learn that they are partners and are not working against each other.

The participants

reviewed many of the obstacles hindering women's presence in parliament, which, according to the participants, included the one-person, one-vote system, small constituencies, social traditions and the lack of financial means.

During the lecture, held at Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Centre, women also discussed the results of the workshop held in March and entitled "Women and the Election Law."

The next meeting planned for further discussing the proposed women's organisations network is scheduled for May 15 at which participants will review a draft memorandum of women's demands for suitable participation in parliament.

Yeltsin pledges to hold Russian election on time

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin said Monday Russia's presidential election would go ahead as scheduled on June 16 and blasted chief bodyguard Alexander Korzhakov for saying it should be put off.

"Korzhakov is not alone in thinking that (Communist leader Gennady) Zyuganov's victory would start a civil war," Mr. Yeltsin told Interfax News Agency.

"But I still believe in the wisdom of Russian voters. That is why the election will take place according to the constitution."

Mr. Korzhakov, a close friend and confidant who is widely believed to have Mr. Yeltsin's ear, said in two interviews published Sunday that he personally favoured delaying the vote to avoid a split in a society fraught with violence.

But Mr. Yeltsin told Interfax: "I have told Korzhakov he must not get involved with politics any more and make such statements."

Mr. Yeltsin, 65, faces a strong challenge in the June poll from Mr. Zyuganov, whose Communist Party made big gains in a parliamentary election last December.

In a clear warning over the Communists' economic plans, Mr. Yeltsin suggested in a separate interview that Russia's Western-style economic and democratic reforms had not gone so far that his opponents could not reverse them if they won power.

"I would not say today that the process of reform has gone so far that it cannot be reversed," Mr. Yeltsin's press service quoted him as saying in an interview with the Russian business magazine Delovye Lyudy.

Mr. Zyuganov, who has not released a detailed economic programme, has said he would carry out no major renationalisation and poured cold water on fears of a return to a Soviet-style econ-

omy if he became president.

But Mr. Yeltsin chastised those who believed that the reforms made during his presidency could not be turned back.

"Here lies the main delusion of certain parts of the democratic forces in Russia," he said. "They think that any political forces will be forced to continue economic transformations."

Meanwhile Mr. Zyuganov Monday welcomed President Yeltsin's pledge not to put off the June 16 presidential election and called for all parties to sign a pact promising to respect the result.

Mr. Zyuganov, in Bonn for a day of meetings with business and political leaders, told Reuters: "In my view it's the correct decision because a breach of the constitution and law would entail major consequences."

"We must guarantee the elections are carried out in a strictly democratic, honest and legal fashion, and at the same time sit around a table with all the parties and movements and sign an agreement that the outcome of the election as expressed by voters will be sacred."

Mr. Zyuganov, whose Communist Party made big gains in a parliamentary election last December, said he was confident of doing well in the June election.

"Our bloc already has the support of 22 million voters, and if we can increase that a bit our election chances are good."

Opinion polls point to a two-horse race for the presidency between Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Zyuganov, with other candidates far behind.

But surveys show Mr. Yeltsin has steadily closed an initially huge gap with Mr. Zyuganov through vigorous campaigning, pledges of big state hand-outs and promises to end the bloody conflict in breakaway Che-

chenya.

Many Western leaders have visited Russia recently and praised Mr. Yeltsin's progress in implementing reform. They vow they will not interfere in Russia's domestic politics, but analysts say the message is loud and clear that Mr. Yeltsin is their man.

Earlier, Mr. Zyuganov warned the West against backing Mr. Yeltsin to the exclusion of all other candidates.

"It is a mistake to back just one politician," Mr. Zyuganov told Pro Sieben Television on a visit to Bonn.

"Yeltsin's party achieved 10 per cent of the vote in the last elections. That should be noted in the West. Supporting this brand of politics is wrong in the medium term."

Mr. Zyuganov, snubbed when German Chancellor Helmut Kohl visited Moscow in February without meeting opposition leaders, will see German politicians including Kohl's top lieutenant Wolfgang Schäuble during his one-day visit to Bonn.

The German Foreign Policy Society (DGAP), which invited Mr. Zyuganov, said he had wanted an opportunity to hear the views of the political and economic establishment on Russian policies.

The Chancellery and Foreign Ministry have said there were no plans for meetings with Mr. Kohl or Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel.

Mr. Zyuganov is scheduled to see some 40 representatives from industry and government in three hours or more of closed discussions which will, at his own request, be off the record.

He will spend up to an hour with each of the heads of the parliamentary factions and will also meet Karlheinz Hornhues, chairman of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee. He is due back in Moscow early Tuesday.



Rescuers evacuate Marg (2nd left) and Arthur Fyans (right) by boat from their flooded property in Laidley, 80 kilometres west of Brisbane Monday. A state of disaster has been declared in the southeastern part of the Australian state of Queensland where floods have left one dead and three missing (Reuter photo)

1 dies, 3 missing in Australian floods

BRISBANE, Australia (R) — A state of disaster has been declared in the southeast of the Australian state of Queensland where floods have left one dead and three missing.

Torrential rains over the past few days have flooded rivers in southern Queensland and northern New South Wales state, cutting roads, leaving thousands of homes without power and forcing scores of people to be evacuated, police said Monday.

The storms have also whipped up huge seas, which have pounded Queensland's southern beaches known as the Gold Coast, leaving beaches badly eroded.

"At this stage we are looking at a million dollars to clean up the beaches alone. I imagine the storms have cost the tourist industry millions overall," Gold Coast Mayor Ray Stevens said.

Queensland Emergency Services Minister Mick Veivers has declared the southeast of Queensland a disaster area.

A six-year-old boy died Sunday after slipping into a flooded waterway near a Brisbane golf course.

Police Monday began searching for a missing yachtsman in the Brisbane River and two men who tried to "surf" a swollen creek west of Brisbane on a piece of tin Sunday night.

Weather Bureau officials said the heavy rains were expected to continue for the next few days.



Australian riot police gather outside Adelaide's top-security Yatala prison after 30 prisoners took three guards hostage Monday. The prisoners have threatened to kill the guards if police storm the building. It was not clear what the prisoners were demanding (Reuter photo)

Australian prisoners hold 3 guards hostage

ADELAIDE (R) Thirty Australian prisoners Monday took three guards hostage in Adelaide's maximum security Yatala Prison, threatening to kill the guards if police stormed the jail.

"We have 30 prisoners who have taken three prison officers hostage. They have taken over the top floor of 'B' division at Yatala High Security Prison," Police Sergeant Mick Symonds told Reuters.

One prisoner involved in the siege told a local television station the guards would be killed if police stormed the jail.

"If they (police) want to run in and gas us, then they are going to have a couple of dead screws on their hands," the prisoner told Adelaide's Channel 10 television station in a telephone interview.

The prisoners took over the cell section of the jail shortly after 3 p.m. local time (0530 GMT), taking four guards hostage, but later released one injured guard who has been taken to hospital, Yatala spokesman Bill Power told Reuters.

"We understand they have some weapons such as knives and clippers. They are behind a locked barrier," Mr. Power said.

Mr. Power said the jail holds around 400 prisoners and all other inmates had been locked in their cells.

Police said the prisoners were categorised as maximum security and police were not releasing details of the prisoners' demands.

Nicaragua's Ortega to run for president

MANAGUA (AFP) — Nicaragua's leftist ex-President Daniel Ortega will wage a fight to get his old job back at the polls after being nominated as his Sandinista Party's candidate for the Oct. 20 election.

Mr. Ortega got the party's nod at the close of its convention Sunday at Managua's Olof Palme Convention Centre.

He defeated human rights ombudswoman Vilma Nunez, drawing 471 of the 540 delegates' votes.

Party sources said his running mate was likely to be businessman Juan Manuel Caldera Lacayo, 68.

Mr. Ortega, 51, led a leftist Sandinista government from 1979-1990, when he was defeated in elections by a centre-right coalition led by current President Violeta Chamorro.

The United States from 1982 through the end of his rule backed and funded Nicaraguan "contra" rebels, based in neighboring Honduras and Costa Rica. The rebels fought for years against the Sandinista army to try to topple Mr. Ortega.

Sri Lankan rock fortress under siege by bees

Colombo (R) — Sri Lanka's rock fortress of Sigiriya, built to fend off invaders, was forced to close after being invaded by a swarm of bees, witnesses said. "Someone threw a bottle at a hive and the bees went crazy," one tourist told Reuters after a visit Saturday, a Buddhist holiday. "There was one man sprawling on the ground with bees on his neck and head. It was really scary," she said the rock, one of the many tourist attractions, was briefly forced to close. The 200-metre rock rises from the jungle and is famous for its frescoes of beautiful damsels, water gardens and a wet-season palace on top.

Diana no longer top glamour queen — magazine

LONDON (R) — Harpers and Queen has dropped Princess Diana from its list of the world's 50 most alluring women and the British society magazine's editor said she had lost her allure by courting the media. The list in the next edition, which includes women both alive and dead, is led by actresses — Audrey Hepburn, Ava Gardner, Julie Christie, Catherine Deneuve and Ingrid Bergman. "Mystery is an essential part of allure," Fiona MacPherson said. "Unfortunately the Princess of Wales hasn't stayed aloof from the media and has rather lost that for the time being. She had it in the beginning, and I think she could regain it."

Venice gondoliers, in dispute, stop serenading

VENICE (R) — Venice's gondoliers stopped serenading their customers as they steer them through the city's romantic canals — because of a dispute over pensions. Fulvio Scarpa, president of the Gondoliers' Association, said his 60-odd members had been asked to contribute to a state pension fund for entertainers because their singing technically makes them freelance musicians. "We've decided to suspend serenades until our accountants can meet representatives of the Entertainers' Pension Fund to find a solution," he said.

Britain's lawyers stressed out, survey finds

LONDON (R) — Britain's lawyers find their jobs intolerably stressful, with long hours and bullying bosses keeping them from taking holidays or spending time with their families, a survey found. The Lawyer magazine surveyed 700 solicitors — lawyers who research and plan cases but do not argue in courtrooms — and found 80 per cent were looking for new jobs while 85 per cent thought their profession had declined in status. Nine out of 10 said they suffered from stress and nearly a third saw themselves as highly stressed.

China paper says too much sex in ads

SHANGHAI (R) — Advertisements in China are over-emphasising sex, materialism and worship of foreign things and should be cleaned up, the official Liberation Daily said. The Shanghai paper said advertising had become a form of popular culture and a key factor in establishing social values, and more vigilance was required to ensure that the content was healthy and correct. "With the continued development of the mass media and the advertising industry, the breadth, depth and strength of adverts in establishing values will continue to grow. So we must clean up the wording of adverts," Liberation Daily said.

Gibraltar parties call for looser ties with Britain

GIBRALTAR (AFP) — Gibraltar's political parties called for a loosening of ties with Britain, in manifestos published Monday ahead of May 16 general elections, but made no reference to a future reversion of the colony to Spanish rule.

The rocky outcrop has been administered by Britain since the 1713 treaty of Utrecht, and has remained a constant source of irritation in London's relations with Madrid, which claims sovereignty.

The ruling Gibraltar Socialist and Labour Party called for a decolonisation of the rock coupled with a "free association" accord with London, which would retain responsibility for defence and foreign affairs.

The opposition Gibraltar Social Democratic Party for its part said "our ultimate objective is to ensure a decolonised status in which Gibraltar enjoys the security of continuing close links with Britain and full European rights."

Meanwhile the tiny National Party said the rock should be granted "city-state" status within the European Union, with Britain's Queen Elizabeth II remaining head of state.

Under the current constitution Gibraltar's 15-member "House of Assembly" is in charge of most purely domestic affairs, London taking responsibility for internal security, foreign and defence policy.

The outcrop has been a key supply base for the Royal Navy since the 18th century, enabling Britain's then powerful fleet to protect British merchant shipping routes through the Mediterranean for two centuries.

The border between Gibraltar and Spain was closed by Spanish dictator General Franco in 1969, reopening only in 1985, 10 years after his death.

Spain's new Foreign Minister Abel Matutes in an interview with the El Mundo newspaper Monday refused to rule out again closing the border, if measures to stem the flow of drugs and contraband proved insufficient.

He said he did not wish for ties with Gibraltar to be severed but added that he would "adopt, if necessary, all alternative measures, without ruling out any solution."

"For the time being we are going to back the measures recently approved by the previous government," Mr. Matutes said. "But if they prove insufficient, we will up the pressure."

The previous Socialist government of Felipe Gonzalez recently considerably boosted border controls, accusing the British colony of being lax in its fight against drug trafficking, money laundering of drug proceeds and tobacco contraband.

Russia accuses U.K. of spying, expels diplomats

MOSCOW (R) — Russia said Monday it was throwing out an unspecified number of British diplomats for spying after its counter-intelligence forces arrested a Russian citizen who admitted to working for MI6 in London.

The head of public relations at Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB), Alexander Zdanovich, told Interfax News Agency that the British ambassador had been summoned to the Foreign Ministry to hear a "stern protest."

He said Andrew Wood was told Russia believed British intelligence was using the embassy as cover for "illegal spying activities on Russian territory."

Interfax quoted Mr. Zdanovich as saying Moscow would expel a number of "staff of English intelligence who, under cover of diplomatic posts at the embassy of Great Britain in Russia, maintained links with the agent who was uncovered."

It was not clear just how many diplomats would be told to leave the country but anything more than one or two would make the affair one of the bigger East-West spy cases since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Earlier Monday, Mr. Zdanovich had said a Russian had been arrested in Moscow as he made contact with Britain's MI6 Secret Intelligence Service (SIS).

Spying equipment had been found in his possession and he had given details of his recruitment.

The British Foreign Office in London declined to comment. FSB officials were not immediately available.

Since the end of the cold war, public spying rows between Moscow and the West have become rare. The latest expulsion is one of the biggest in recent years. Eleven British diplomats and journalists were expelled from the Soviet Union in 1989 in retaliation for London throwing out 11 alleged Soviet spies.

Last year, a Russian journalist left Britain after being accused of spying.

A British parliamentary committee warned in March of a risk of increased Russian espionage, although MI6 and the MI5 counter-intelligence service have reduced their operations against Moscow.

In February, Moscow expelled a British businessman, Nigel Shakespear, who had once been assistant military attaché at the Moscow embassy. It gave no reasons.

That same month, Russia expelled an Israeli diplomat, saying he was a spy who had been exposed after a Russian citizen was arrested handing over secret documents for cash.

Aznar storms into office in Spain

MADRID (R) — New Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar and his government stormed into office Monday with a thinly veiled threat of retaliation if other European Union states fail to wait for Spain on the road to a single currency.

Foreign Minister Abel Matutes, an experienced former member of the EU's executive European Commission, issued the warning in interviews with Spain's two main dailies and a leading radio station just hours before King Juan Carlos swore in the cabinet.

Mr. Aznar, a conservative 43-year-old former tax inspector who took over this weekend from long-serving Socialist Premier Felipe Gonzalez, says his top aim is to cut spending so Spain can meet strict economic standards and join a single currency.

"At the current rate, we won't make it in time, so an extra effort will be needed... Even so, it will not be easy," Mr. Matutes told his interviewers.

Asked what would happen if Spain were not ready to join a first wave into Economic and Monetary Union

(EMU) when EU states are assessed in early 1998, he replied:

"It seems to me a reasonable idea to stop the clock of monetary union for a few months so that a few more of us can jump onto the bandwagon."

"It's even likely that this will happen," he said. "What's more, I don't think France will want to leave out (of EMU) countries of the size of Spain and Italy, with competitive economies."

In the EMU debate in Europe, the word "competitive" is usually part of the phrase "competitive devaluations" — the risk that states that do not qualify to join the single currency might give up and devalue their money, making their exports much more competitive and storming their partners' markets.

France is one of the EU states most concerned about trade and has been seeking ways to prevent competitive devaluations.

Mr. Matutes's words echoed those of his predecessor in the outgoing Socialist government, Carlos West-

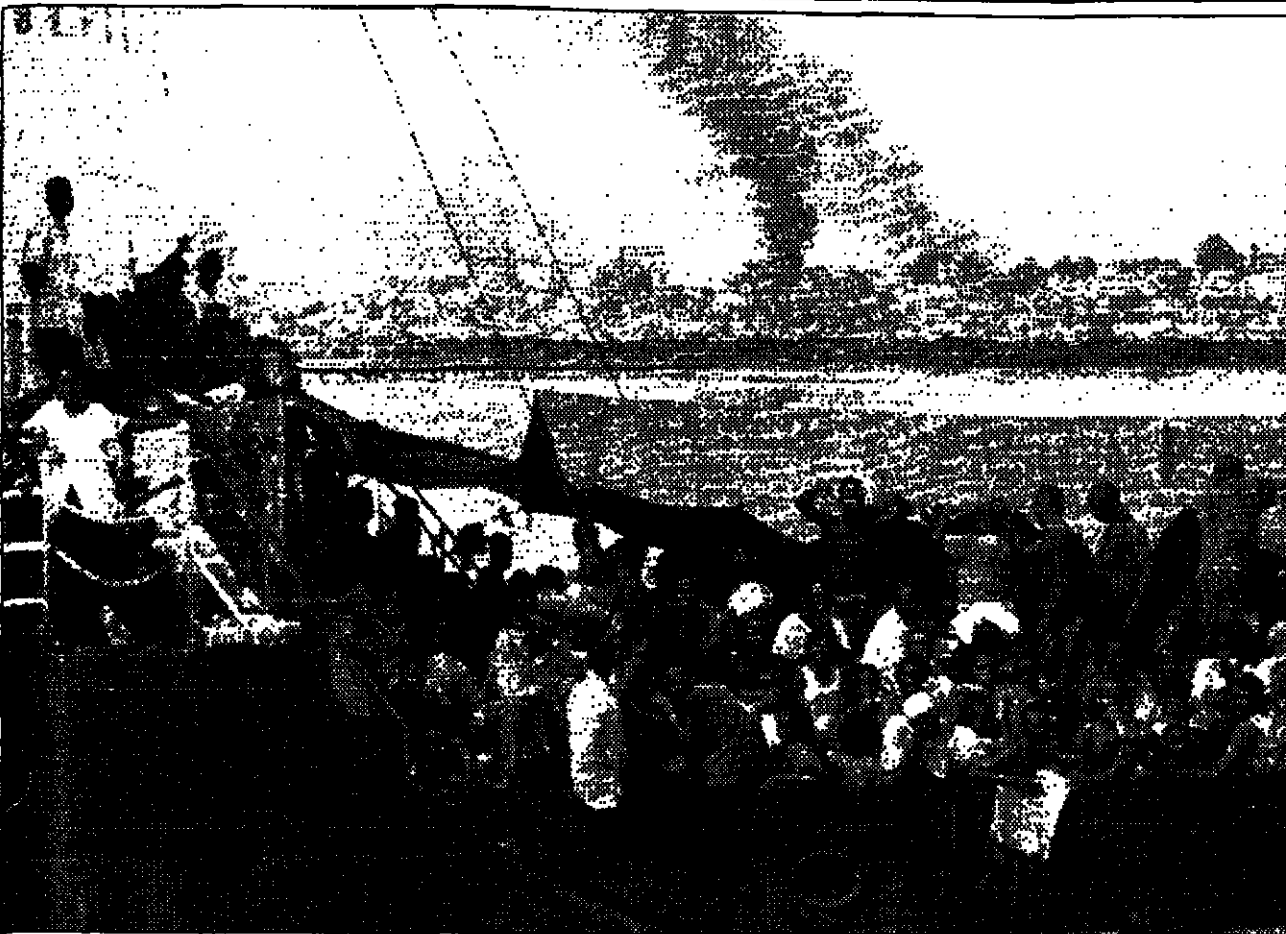
endorp, who shocked EU partners in January with a warning that the bloc might have to stop the EMU clock if it could not get a critical mass of states that must include at least one of Britain, Italy or Spain.

The new foreign minister's gloomy assessment of Spain's chances of meeting the so-called "convergence criteria" in time was sharply at odds with the general line taken by Mr. Aznar and by his economy minister, Rodrigo Rato, who say it can be done.

"If we change the spending laws into laws that are a little more rigorous, I think Spain will have a clear opportunity to be in a good negotiating position in 1998," Mr. Rato said last week.

The Spanish budget was rolled over from 1995 this year after parliament threw out the Socialist government's draft budget.

Mr. Aznar inherits the country after 13 years of Socialist rule with 46 trillion pesetas (\$359 billion) of government debt, 22.7 per cent unemployment and a bloated, unwieldy public sector.



Thousands of Liberian civilians crammed into a Nigerian cargo ship steam out of the Freeport of Monrovia as the city burns in the background. Heavy fighting continued in the Liberian capital today with Krahn militias gaining considerable ground (Reuters photo)

Body of former CIA chief identified

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The body of former CIA Director William Colby was found washed up on the shores of a tributary of the Potomac River Monday nine days after he went missing while canoeing, police said.

Sergeant Tim Plumer, spokesman for the Charles County Sheriff's Office, said by telephone that a family member had identified Colby's body at 8:05 a.m. (1205 GMT) on the shores of a river leading to the Potomac in the town of Rock Point, Maryland.

"At this point it doesn't appear to be any foul play, but officers are still investigating," Sgt. Plumer said.

CNN television reported that the body was found about 20 metres from where Colby's canoe was discovered last week. Officials have presumed Colby died in a boating accident.

Sgt. Plumer would not confirm a CNN report that Colby's body was being sent to Baltimore, Maryland for an autopsy.

"A forensic investigator is on the scene and will decide what to do with the body," Sgt. Plumer said, adding that "all we know right now" is that it was found.

Mr. Colby, 76, told his wife in an April 27 phone call that he was going canoeing, which he did often from his Rock Point home. The empty canoe was discovered the

following day.

Colby led the Central Intelligence Agency from 1973 to 1976, a turbulent period that included the Watergate scandal that brought down President Richard Nixon.

Besides heading the CIA through the Watergate scandal that led to Nixon's resignation in 1974, Colby was also the focus of congressional inquiries into CIA activities, such as assassination plots against foreign leaders and illegal domestic spying.

Although he was a dedicated cold warrior, he called for a 50 per cent reduction in U.S. defence spending after the break-up of the Soviet Union.

Born Jan. 4, 1920, Colby began his career as a spy at age 24 when he infiltrated Nazi-occupied France to work with the French resistance.

After graduating from Princeton University in 1940, Colby enlisted in the army in 1941 and then joined the Office of Strategic Services, the CIA's forerunner.

Colby earned a law degree at Columbia University after the war and practiced law until he was recruited by the first CIA director, Allen Dulles.

Colby served in Stockholm, Rome and Saigon, where he directed clandestine operations for the intelligence agency in the 1960s.

Italy's politicians at odds over parliament jobs

ROME (R) — Italy's centre-left Olive Tree group, which promised to work closely with the opposition after winning last month's general election, found itself at odds with the centre-right Monday, even before the new parliament convened.

The two blocs clashed over the offer of Olive Tree leader Romano Prodi, widely expected to be named prime minister later this month, to give the Senate (upper house) presidency to the centre-right Freedom Alliance, in what he has called a show of goodwill to the opposition.

Italian newspapers Monday said Olive Tree leaders were upset because Freedom Alliance leader Silvio Berlusconi announced Sunday that he had already chosen former Italian President Francesco Cossiga, a life senator, for the job.

Leaders of the two blocs are to meet Monday (1030 GMT) to discuss the naming of leadership positions in parliament, including the Senate presidency.

Senator Cesare Salvi, an Olive Tree member, told the L'Unita daily, that the conflict did not bode well for future relations between the two blocs.

"I don't think the Freedom Alliance is acting correctly," Sen. Salvi said. "You can't open a meeting which requires seriousness and reciprocal respect by launching a name in a public announcement."

"Berlusconi's proposal sounds like a provocation, not a solution," Gian Claudio Bressa, a close Prodi aide, said. "Maybe it's a way to reject our kind offer."

Monday's talks between Olive Tree and Freedom Alliance leaders are to set the stage for the convening Thursday of the new parliament elected in the April 21 general election.

In addition to the Senate president's job, they will also discuss leadership positions of key parliamentary committees. The job of Chamber of Deputies (lower house) president will go to an Olive Tree deputy.

The election, which set the left on the road to power in Italy for the first time, gave the Olive Tree control of the 315-member Senate but left it short of a majority in the Chamber of Deputies, with 284 of the 630 seats.

Mr. Prodi, all but certain to be asked by President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro to form a government later this month, needs to win a vote of confidence from both houses of parliament.

U.S. troops open fire again in Liberian capital

MONROVIA (R) — U.S. Marines protecting their embassy opened fire in Liberia's capital Monday and sporadic shooting echoed around the city after the deadline for a truce promised by dominant faction leader Charles Taylor.

Mediators focused their efforts on rallying support for a West African summit on Liberia in Ghana Wednesday. Foreign ministers were due to meet in Ghana's capital Accra Tuesday.

U.S. Marines opened fire during a morning of shooting in Monrovia. "Some fire was directed at one of the Marine emplacements and they did fire back," Ambassador William Milam told reporters. He said there was no sign of casualties.

U.S. Marines protecting the embassy shot dead three Liberians on April 30 after a 10-day truce collapsed and the building came under fire when fighting moved close to it.

Sporadic shooting continued Monday after a midday (1200 GMT) deadline set for a truce promised by Mr. Taylor, who launched the war in 1989 and whose forces have been at the centre of a month-long stand-off with ethnic Krahn rivals.

Fighting during the morning had been more intense. Mr. Taylor, a vice-chairman on the transitional ruling Council of State, announced a unilateral truce on British Broadcasting Corporation Radio to coincide with the talks in Ghana.

Mr. Taylor said the peace process was on track even though he would not be attending the Accra summit. He said the truce had been agreed in telephone negotiations with peace mediators from Nigeria and Guinea.

Several ceasefires have come and gone. On Saturday mediators said Mr. Taylor had agreed to a truce. He promptly denied it.

Freed American slaves set up Liberia as Africa's first independent republic in 1847. The war has killed more than 150,000 people, driven over half the pre-war population of 2.5 million from their homes and wrecked the economy.

Sunday saw some of the worst fighting since battles broke out a month ago between Mr. Taylor's men and ethnic Krahn fighters loyal to Roosevelt Johnson, who was flown out of Monrovia by the Americans and who is already in Accra.

Mr. Johnson's fighters broke out of Monrovia's main barracks Sunday to attack forces loyal to Mr. Taylor and fired during vicious fighting. Mr. Johnson's men killed five of their foes by shooting them or cutting their throats.

Troops from the West African ECOMOG peacekeeping forces intervened later to drive militia fighters off the streets.

Mr. Taylor's men milled around the Mamba Point diplomatic area Monday, loading their weapons and cleaning their stolen cars. Small arms fire and the occasional mortar could be heard from the eastern end of the city.

Fighting broke out on April 6 when the ruling council and



Peacekeeping Nigerian ECOMOG soldiers walk past the bodies of four NPFL soldiers who were executed shortly before by Krahn militia fighters as they swept into downtown Monrovia. Heavy fighting continued in the capital Monrovia with scores of buildings being set ablaze by the battle (Reuters photo)

gunmen loyal to Mr. Taylor and fellow council Vice-Chairman Alhaji Kromah tried to arrest Mr. Johnson for murder.

The Americans, who have an amphibious battle group off Monrovia, airlifted out more than 2,000 foreign nationals early in the fighting.

Thousands of Liberians are trying to flee by sea. About 2,000 people fled the burning city Sunday on a rusting, overloaded Nigerian freighter, heading for Accra and Lagos.

Burundi army denies killings, U.N. officials silent

BUJUMBURA (R) — Burundi's army Monday denied detailed allegations that troops killed 235 Hutu civilians 10 days ago and senior United Nations officials kept silent on the worst reported massacre this year.

The Defence Ministry denied that any massacre occurred at Buhoro on April 26.

Humanitarian sources said Sunday that 136 women, 87 children and 12 men were killed by men of Burundi's overwhelmingly Tutsi army in apparent reprisal for a raid by Hutu rebels. Only 11 of the dead were killed by gunshots. The rest were butchered by bayonets, knives and machetes, the sources said.

"How could this have happened? You can hide one or two people but not 200 plus. There would have to be a grave somewhere," Lieutenant Colonel Isaie Nibizi, the Defence Ministry spokesman, told foreign reporters.

The humanitarian sources, fearing for their own safety and that of survivors, refused to be quoted by name or organisation by journalists who visited Buhoro during the weekend.

But the sources included witnesses to the attack, people who personally verified the body count and others who took testimony from witnesses. The army is fighting a bush war against Hutus of Leonard Nyangoma's Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD).

Both sides slaughter civilians as a

matter of course, diplomats say, but the army has never admitted committing any of the large massacres it has been accused of in the past three years of ethnic conflict.

Burundi's potential for repeating the 1994 genocide in neighbouring Rwanda has rung alarm bells at the U.N. Security Council and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

Yet the five U.N. human rights monitors sent to Burundi to investigate incidents like Buhoro have so far failed to visit the village, days after news of the massacre began circulating in the capital Bujumbura.

Maroufa Diabira, one of the U.N. monitors, told reporters on May 3 that "important meetings and security considerations" had prevented the team from visiting the scene.

"We don't want investigation of one massacre to stop us from being able to investigate others," Mr. Diabira added.

Mr. Nibizi, the Defence Ministry spokesman, showed reporters the military reports from the area which did not mention the Buhoro incident, the worst this year in what one diplomat calls Burundi's "genocide by stealth".

The humanitarian sources said they reported the massacre to military authorities in Gitega, Burundi's second largest town, and also in Bujumbura.

Mr. Nibizi said Burundi's Hutu president, Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, was in Gitega last week, 20 kilometres

south of Buhoro.

"How could this have got past the local military commander and the president who was on the ground?"

"We think this is a case of intoxication (disinformation) against the events which took place at Roi Khaled Hospital," Mr. Nibizi said.

The army said Saturday that Hutu rebels attacked Bujumbura's Roi Khaled Hospital Friday night, killing four patients and a guard.

Reporters who visited Buhoro during the weekend were not able for security reasons to visit the exact site of the massacre, where most of the victims were buried. It is up a nearby hill patched with pine and eucalyptus forests.

The sources said army units from Gihogazi and Bugendana started to arrive in Buhoro at dawn on April 26. A few days earlier Hutu rebels had killed an unknown number of civilians at Buhoro.

Witnesses said the Burundi army carried out the operation, but other sources said members of the extremist Tutsi militia, the Sans Echech, could also have been involved.

Most of the victims were reported to be displaced Hutus who had fled their homes in other areas to seek refuge at Buhoro.

Four days after the massacre, on April 30, rebels killed three soldiers in nearby Bugendana, the army said.

S. Africa waits for miracle on constitution

CAPE TOWN (R) — Negotiators hoping for a miracle to avert a divisive national referendum on South Africa's new post-apartheid constitution drew up rules Monday to deal with a possible concession in last-minute talks.

"I think there is a whiff of something in the air... a miracle could happen," Constitutional Assembly Chairman Cyril Ramaphosa told his Management Committee.

He told Reuters he and National Party (NP) negotiator Roelf Meyer would resume the search for a compromise on mainly white Afrikaans-language schools later Monday.

Mr. Ramaphosa, who is also secretary general of the majority African National Congress (ANC), won all-party support for a proposal to be put to the assembly later Monday to bend its rules to allow for a deadlock-breaking amendment any time before Wednesday's 11 a.m. vote on a final blueprint for post-apartheid rule.

As the two-year constitution-writing process entered its final 48 hours, President Nelson Mandela's government was also scheduled to rule on an ANC call to postpone municipal elections in Kwazulu-Natal province.

Violence between the ANC and conservative Zulu Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party has escalated in the Zulu homeland province in the run-up to the polls.

Mr. Mandela, due back from a half-day visit to Mozambique Monday afternoon, scheduled a special cabinet meeting to decide whether to postpone or stagger the May 29 vote.

Mr. Buthelezi's Inkatha boycotted most of the negotiations on the draft South Africa constitution bill published Monday and due to be formally presented for debate at 4 p.m. (1400 GMT).

Though most of the text has clear majority support from the six parties that did par-

ticipate in the negotiations, the draft includes three clauses unacceptable to some or most of the opposition.

The disputes cover NP-led demands on the protection of single-language schools, employer rights in a labour dispute and protection of property rights accrued under white rule.

Sources in the ANC and the NP said that if there was agreement on education, the other issues could also be resolved.

The Executive Committee of Deputy President F.W. de Klerk's white-led NP met in Cape Town Monday to decide whether to oppose the constitution Wednesday.

With Inkatha absent, it is unlikely that the ANC can win the required two-thirds majority without NP support.

Talks between the ANC and the NP broke down in the early hours of Saturday, raising the prospect of an NP "no" vote.

If the vote fails, a deadlock-breaking mechanism takes over that would probably require a referendum and could lead to a new general election.

The NP-aligned Afrikaans daily newspaper Die Burger said Monday the NP withdrew its support for an ANC compromise proposal on education Friday after a fierce internal party row.

The newspaper said the NP might consider supporting the constitution Wednesday in the interests of national unity and then pulling out of Mr. Mandela's transitional coalition government which is scheduled to stay in place until 1999.

Mr. Ramaphosa and Deputy President Thabo Mbeki met Mr. De Klerk and chief NP negotiator Roelf Meyer Sunday to explore settlement options, but declined to give details of the talks.

"The meeting was very cordial. The discussions are continuing," Mr. Ramaphosa said.

30 killed in Sri Lankan battle

COLOMBO (R) — Eighteen Tamil Tiger rebels and 12 soldiers were killed when a large group of guerrillas ambushed an army patrol in eastern Sri Lanka Monday, the military said.

An officer and 11 soldiers were killed when rebels ambushed a road-clearing patrol at Mylanthenna in Punani in the Batticaloa district in the morning, a military statement said.

"Ground troops confirmed that 18 terrorists were killed and over 30 wounded," the statement said.

Rebel radio traffic monitored by the army indicated a rebel area leader identified as Kunam who led the surprise attack was killed in the firefight, it said.

Military officials earlier said two soldiers

were wounded in the firefight while one was missing in action.

An army lieutenant was killed and a captain and a soldier were wounded when Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels ambushed reinforcements which rushed to the aid of the patrol, the officials said.

The rebels, using a rocket-propelled grenade, hit a Unicorn troop carrier bringing in the reinforcements, they said.

The Tigers also wounded one soldier when an army patrol was ambushed while returning to base in Batticaloa, the officials added.

In another attack in the same area two soldiers were wounded when rebels ambushed their road clearing patrol, they said.



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Railways to the future

THE MINISTRY of Transport's decision to construct and operate a rail transport system linking Amman with Zarka and Sweileh within a year is certainly a step in the right direction not only to modernise our urban transport system and make it more environment friendly but also to alleviate congestion on our highways and reduce road accidents. Given the fact that Zarka is the most populated city after Amman and is closely linked with the capital city in more ways than one can count, it was inevitable that road transportation between the two will increase to unacceptable proportions if it is not augmented by a railway link that is efficient, dependable and fast. This is apparently what the Ministry of Transport is aiming to achieve.

The plan to deploy electric energy instead of normal fossil fuel for operating the rail link between Amman and its satellite urban areas is all the more encouraging since electricity is infinitely cleaner and less harmful to the environment than other forms of energy. There is hardly a modern country in the world that does not depend on railroads to haul people and goods between centres of population and industry. It is our understanding that linking Amman with Zarka and Sweileh will be only the beginning of a process that aims to extend this service to other urban and industrial areas in the country. Whether Jordan will import or export its industrial production through Mediterranean ports as many had envisaged the case would be in the wake of the signing of the peace treaty with Israel or by way of Aqaba, the country certainly needs a modern national railway service.

What we are not sure of, though, is whether such a system should remain state-owned as now planned or made a free enterprise project. Private sector's involvement in the system right from the start would assure its efficiency, dependability and profitability. We must draw in this vein on the experiences of other nations of the world. The best option for now appears to be a joint venture at the start of the rail service between the state and private capital, at least for a certain period of time. But before that, let us make sure that the government is serious about the project itself. We had heard a lot about reintroducing railway links in Jordan and the region before, but all remained just talk — no more than ideas on the drawing board.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE START of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on the final phase of a permanent peace settlement carries with it new hopes and optimism for the Palestinian people, said Al Ra'i daily Monday. The three-year negotiations, which follow five long years since the start of the peace process, are expected to be arduous, and discussion of thorny issues will be hard and difficult, but the Palestinians will not lose hope and will pursue every effort to attain their national aspirations, according to the paper. Stressing that the whole peace process which started in Madrid in 1991 was based on the concept of exchanging land for peace, the paper said that what the Palestinians hope to achieve is an independent state and the return of the refugees to their homeland in addition to a permanent solution to the Jewish settlement issue. One can only feel encouraged that the talks in Taba will yield fruitful results, especially after hearing the heads of the two delegations express determination to delve directly into the core of the issue and lose no time in reaching a final settlement, noted the daily. Should agreement on a permanent settlement be reached, said the paper, the whole Middle East will see the dawn of genuine peace.

A WRITER for Al Doustour Monday called on the Jordanian government to immediately start talks with Israel over the future of the Palestinian refugees living in Jordan. Mohammad Subeishi said that the Jordan-Israel peace treaty provides for the start of such talks as soon as the Palestinians and the Israelis embark on the final negotiations for a permanent settlement. Furthermore, Jordan, Israel, Egypt and the Palestinian National Authority are also required, under the peace process, to discuss and settle the issue of the displaced Palestinians who fled their homeland following the 1967 war, said the writer. Referring to a recent report by the U.S. State Department which claimed that the Palestinians in Jordan constitute more than half of the country's population but that they are not fairly represented in government institutions, the writer said that the report is clearly designed to reflect Washington's intention of supporting Israel's plans to prevent the Palestin-

The View from Fourth Circle

What was that war in south Lebanon all about?

By Rami G. Khouri

NOW THAT the latest round of the war in Lebanon has quieted down, we would do well to reassess: a) precisely what that nasty little war was all about and b) how it fits into the wider picture of the Middle East region. Based on the spontaneous comments that I have heard from friends and colleagues during the past month, and also on reading press commentaries from throughout the region, it seems clear that the fighting was not really about what it seemed to be about, i.e. not only about the occupation of south Lebanon by Israel or the shelling of northern Israel by Lebanese guerrillas, or Shimon Peres' desire to win the upcoming elections by acting tough.

It was about human identity and national survival in the Middle East, expressed in the hysterical Arab and Israeli symbols of God's rightful messengers, "chosen people", armed zealots and holy warriors. The war in Lebanon was really about the shape of our future — about whether the Middle East will remain a predominantly Arab/Muslim region with indigenous Christian, Jewish and other minorities, or will become a mosaic of fragmented, dependent Arab surrogates of an omnipotent Israeli/American hegemony.

These two differing visions reflect the true nature of the battle under way in the Middle East, which is an extension of the violent ideological and identity battles that first manifested themselves openly in the 1991 Gulf war. The questions then and now are the same: Can Arabs and Israelis enjoy equal rights and freedoms to chart their own national development in genuine peace, coexistence and cooperation? Or, are the Arabs fated to remain perpetually subservient to the historical claims, security needs and commercial designs of Israel and its Western patrons, who may only view the Arab region as a strategic and minerals-based service centre for their own narrow interests? It was noteworthy, I thought, how the Lebanon war regressed both the haughtiness of the American-British-Israeli axis and a countervailing anti-imperial Arab nationalist defiance that refuses to endure a degrading recolonisation of Arab interests and identity.

These sentiments, combined with the suffering of Lebanon, generated much Arab anger and frustration, resulting in two consequences: they have hardened the general Arab attitude to Israel, the United States and the peace process in the short term, and they have rekindled a common, masochistic and very self-destructive Arab perception that our fate is not for us to determine but rather is in the hands of others.

Arab anger and frustration during the Lebanon war were directed against three almost equal targets: Israel, the United States and Arab governments and regimes. Many Arabs have charged Israel with using this peace-making moment in the region to carve out for itself a new security posture that includes anti-Arab alliances with Turkey and Eritrea, a stronger strategic relationship with the United States, and a new role as self-appointed partner of

Washington and London in the fight against rogue regimes in states such as Iran, Iraq, Libya and Sudan.

The United States' credibility as a peace mediator has been strongly questioned by many Arabs, due to Washington's imbalanced, pro-Israel posture that was manifested in several diplomatic forms. Sadly, though, modern history indicates that the more the Arab people lose confidence in America's credibility as an honest mediator in the Arab-Israeli conflict, the more inclined Arab governments become to work closely with Washington. The angry and perplexed sentiments that were expressed in this respect in the Arab World last month were important indicators of the growing gap between the identity of Arab people and the policies of Arab governments.

The Gulf-based daily Al Khaleej's commentator Mohammad Idriss, reflecting widespread sentiment, charged that the Arabs owe Lebanon a debt of gratitude for exposing the American-sponsored peace process as one that aims "to impose unconditional surrender on the Arabs," and for allowing us to "rediscover the truth about Israel as an aggressive colonial entity and agent of Western imperialism."

"Unfortunately," said his Egyptian colleague Assayed Zahra, "we cannot hold America alone responsible" for its pro-Israeli double standards, because "our Arab governments are responsible too, and everyone knows that."

With hundreds of dead and injured and some half a million Lebanese uprooted from their homes, many Arabs asked and still ask today: Why does the world not convene a summit against terror when Arab civilians die, as it did when scores of Israelis were killed? Why did Israel and the United States welcome European participation in the Sharm Al Sheikh summit but did not welcome Europeans to help make peace in Lebanon? Why did the United States diligently prod the world to implement U.N. resolutions against Iraq and Libya, but has not used parallel vehemence to implement equally valid U.N. resolutions calling for Israel's unconditional withdrawal from south Lebanon?

Such criticism of the U.S.-UK-Israel axis is combined with expressions of concern about what this combination plans for the future of the region, as if we were merely spectators watching the redrawing of the Mideast map, as happened when that map was first drawn in its modern configuration around 1920. Typical of such criticism was the comment by Salaheddin Hafez in Cairo's semi-official Al Ahram newspaper. He charged: We are witnessing nothing less than an American-backed Israeli attempt to redraw the strategic map of the Middle East. Behind Israel's tension-raising measures in Lebanon, Libya, Iran, and Sudan, he saw "a desire to trigger crises and fuel tension in the region as a prelude to clearing the ground for the construction of a new [Middle East] order that gives primacy to American and Israeli interests... [giving] the impression that the peace process and the various Arab-

Israeli deals concluded hastily under its auspices are no more than a cover for a more far-reaching Israeli and American objective, namely to impose their control over the region."

Mahmond Awad, editor of Egypt's Akhbar Al Yom weekly, goes even further, suggesting that the Israeli-Turkish strategic agreement signed recently "heralds the establishment of a new security axis with Israel as its pivot and which is to incorporate Turkey, Jordan at a second stage, and perhaps Eritrea and Ethiopia later... Analysts had supposed that when Israel spoke of a 'New Middle East' it meant one based on peace and economic cooperation, but it transpires that what it has in mind is military overlordship."

Many Arab writers have seen the Israeli-Turkish strategic agreement as heralding Israel's wish to strike against Iran and Syria from facilities in Turkey, signalling Israel's move to move beyond Arab-Israeli peace and to face any other potential threats to its interests.

Such views, right or wrong as they may be, reflect a trend that has plagued the Mideast for the past two decades: the slow, persistent polarisation of society into a well-off minority closely connected to ruling commercial and political power elites, and a growing majority of the poor and of barely coping middle class families that stands to suffer even more as the Mideast is heaved into the throes of IMF-sanctioned privatisation and adjustment policies. For many Arabs, the future appears frightening, not promising — if the Arab World is fated to swallow the commercial and cultural dictates of a new American-Israeli empire in the Middle East, and if Arab governments cannot work together for common Arab rights and hopes in the face of recurring Israeli-American arrogance, violence and anti-Arab disdain. The cycle is bitter and never-ending, it seems to many in the Arab World.

As the fighting in south Lebanon passes through another season, so does the painful, violent fragmentation of the Middle East into two opposing camps that broadly line up with and against the American-Israeli axis. This suggests that peace and stability — whether in south Lebanon, northern Israel or many Arab lands — will remain elusive until the Middle East and its global patrons come to terms with the deeper issue of whether the Arab people will achieve genuine independence or suffer American-Israeli imperial tutelage for decades to come. This was the real meaning of the war in Lebanon, and why it evoked such diplomatic savagery from the U.S. and the UK, such ferocious militarism from Israel, and such intense emotional responses from many parts of the Arab World. We will see all of these again and again in the near future, if we do not collectively work as hard to deliver justice and dignity to all people in the Middle East as we do to deliver security to Israel.

'It is time for the world to ban land mines once and for all'

By Yasushi Akashi

NEW YORK — Governments have recently gathered in Geneva to begin a final review session on the land-mine protocol of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons. This protocol is the only source of international treaty law that directly applies to the use of land mines.

While 27 countries now support a total ban on land mines, the negotiations to date have stalled over technical details of a complex system of restrictions. The underlying assumption of these discussions remains the military imperative of land mines.

This assumption must be reexamined in a new light: Do the military advantages of land mines indeed out-

weigh the costs they inflict not only during battle but years — and even decades, after-war is over?

American troops in Bosnia have painfully brought home the message that land mines are indiscriminate and have no regard for ceasefire or peace agreements. The first two American casualties in this small country — where an estimated 3 million land mines lie buried — resulted from a simple and easy to use weapon that costs between \$3 and \$30 per unit. In contrast, land mines cost upwards of \$300 each to be removed. It is estimated that there are 110 million active land mines around the world, and an equal number stockpiled. Some 2,000 people — mainly civilians — are killed or

maimed by land mines each month, often after hostilities have ceased.

As special representative of the U.N. secretary-general in Cambodia and in the former Yugoslavia, I have personally witnessed the toll land mines take on nations that are striving to recover from years of armed conflict. The United Nations is involved in mine-clearance operations in Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia, Cambodia, Croatia, Mozambique and Yemen, and is planning new operations in other mine-afflicted countries. More than 5,000 "deminers" are employed in these programmes, and while they remove some 80,000 land mines each year, this figure pales when compared to the total of 35 million that remain in the

soil of these seven countries alone.

A study recently published by the International Committee of the Red Cross has raised serious questions about the military usefulness of land mines, which, while terrorising civilian populations, do not stop opposing armies.

Humanitarian organisations are convinced that the immediate and short-term military objectives in using land mines can never be justified in light of the devastating casualties to civilians and the long-term consequences in affected countries, making reconstruction and rehabilitation nearly impossible for decades.

For every mine now cleared, 20 more are laid. Under these circumstances, all efforts to remove them

are Sisyphean. As the number of mines increases around the world, so do the casualty figures. Already more women, children and agricultural workers are killed or maimed by land mines after a ceasefire than during actual fighting.

Land mines make whole regions uninhabitable. They displace populations and create demographic pressures that destabilise neighbouring regions. Societies that are often desperately poor and have weak public health systems must care for the victims of land mines. These weapons of destruction drain the resources of societies already debilitated by war; they impede efforts to rebuild societies, and, in the worst case, they can lead to further political upheaval.

These horrific conditions will only increase exponentially so long as land mines continue to be produced and used. For years, the humanitarian organisations that have witnessed and documented the devastating effects of land mines have argued that there can be no solution to this deadly menace outside of a complete and total ban.

It is now time for the people of the world and their leaders to demand a ban on this instrument of horror once and for all.

The writer is the U.N. undersecretary-general for humanitarian affairs. This article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

A strange little war

By Haim Baram

ISRAEL RUNS its strange little war in South Lebanon under false pretences and reaps a bitter harvest. True to form, most of the commentators here keep complaining about Hizbollah "terrorism" and fail to read the real picture. The battles against Hizbollah are unnecessary, and the conflict in South Lebanon can be solved as soon as Israel decides to withdraw from the occupied part of the troubled country.

Hizbollah's animosity against Israel is not a major problem, nor has it anything to do with a worldwide Islamic conspiracy. The solution to this conflict depends on the conclusion of the Israeli-Syrian negotiations over the Golan Heights. The irony of the situation is really glaring: Israelis kill Lebanese and Lebanese kill Israelis, simply because of Israel's internal politics.

Prime Minister Peres is willing to withdraw from the Golan in return for "real peace," but he is unable to do so before the

May 29 elections. With a little help from his foe Hafez Al Assad, Mr. Peres has succeeded in shelving the Golan issue until the end of May. Even the Likud leaders neglect to mention the previously thorny subject, at least for the time being, since the general public is completely indifferent to it. This is an interesting lesson in electioneering. Most polls indicate that there is a large majority against any withdrawal from the Golan, and the mistrust of Mr. Assad is overwhelming. On the other hand, the media do not mention Syria, as negotiations have practically ceased. Therefore, the once burning issue has quickly become a non-issue.

Mr. Assad has agreed to fade out of the picture temporarily, but even Mr. Peres' electoral prospects fail to motivate him to restrain Hizbollah on Israel's behalf. Yasser Arafat has to operate under tremendous constraints. Mr. Assad, on the other hand, is a free man, a sovereign ruler of his own independent country, and even his acute under-

standing of international realities has not turned him into a servile puppet of the Americans. He is prepared to wait patiently for the elections, but the Hizbollah operations in Lebanon constitute a constant reminder that the Syrians control the arena and hold the keys to any conceivable solution. Hence the great cynical spectacle: the bloodshed in Lebanon is a direct function of Mr. Assad's and Mr. Peres' preoccupations elsewhere.

It is more than reasonable to assume that Mr. Assad considers the heavy blows to Israel's image of invincibility as crucially important both to his negotiating position over the Golan, and future relations with Israel in general. There is a universal admiration in the region for Hizbollah's military success and this is reflected even in the Israeli press. Hamas' twisted heroism has also shattered Israel's self-confidence, which has always contained racist undertones.

The proud Assad needs these signs of weakness, to persuade himself and

then his fellow Syrians that future contacts with Israel can be conducted on an equal footing. Paradoxically, Hizbollah helps Mr. Assad to come to terms with the possibility and viability of coexistence with Israel. Every fallen Israeli and Arab in this proxy war oils with his blood the future reconciliation between Israel and Syria.

Not only the future of the Golan depends on the outcome of the elections. Quite clearly, the collaborators of the South Lebanon Army (SLA) are impatient for May 29. They certainly hope for a Likud win, and that a long procrastination in the Israeli-Syrian peace process follows. Mr. Peres and his colleagues have reassured the SLA chiefs over and over again, but they have made little impression. Antoine Lahad and his aides understand perfectly that the Israelis will abandon them to their worse-than-death fate as soon as they resolved their difficulties with Mr. Assad.

A senior Foreign Ministry official spoke to

MEI with refreshing frankness: "The coveted peace with Syria will be accompanied by the pacification of Hizbollah. Some Lebanese collaborators will find refuge in Israel, but the majority will be in dire trouble. It is almost certain that the Lebanese government, prompted by Mr. Assad, will give Mr. Peres assurances that all the collaborators will be pardoned. It is almost equally certain that many of them will be butchered with impunity. The Lebanese government will express regret and explain that time is required before they restore law and order to the south. One could expect some condemnations in the Israeli press, and then South Lebanon will be cast aside, a part of history that everyone will be very happy to leave behind."

If Likud wins power in May, a certain delay in the negotiations with Syria is to be expected, but the settlers in the Golan and the collaborators in South Lebanon may find their celebrations short-lived. The pro-American Likud

leader Bibi Netanyahu is very likely to follow the U.S. dictate on Syria and Lebanon, in return for relaxing pressure on the West Bank and Gaza. Traditionally, Likud is less committed to the Golan than Labour, and a repetition of the Sinai affair is possible. In the 1980s, Menachem Begin surrendered the entire Sinai Peninsula to Egypt in order to gain a free hand against the Palestinians. Mr. Netanyahu is very likely to take a similar line of action regarding Syria.

Some Israeli commentators have suggested recently that Mr. Peres also has vested interests in a prolonged "war" with Hizbollah in order to keep alive the myth of the Islamist plot against the West in general and Israel in particular. Others (like author Aharon Amir in Ma'ariv on March 24) have opined that Israel imitates the U.S. line on the Islamist conspiracy without taking into consideration that it is part of the Middle East, unlike the Americans.

Middle East International

Egypt takes quantum leap in privatisation

CAIRO (R) — The Egyptian government has jumped a quantum leap forward in its privatisation programme by agreeing for the first time to relinquish majority control of a state-owned company through a public share offering.

Ecstatic brokers described the decision Monday as a historic turning point for the Egyptian economy because the government had broken through the psychological barrier which for years kept private-sector shareholders on the sidelines.

"It sets the precedent we have all been waiting for. It paves the way for the economy to grow at a much higher rate," said Ali Al Tahri, chairman of brokers Hermes Financial.

"It sends a very strong signal to anyone who follows the Egyptian market," added Ahmad Heykal, managing director of portfolio managers Egyptian Financial Group.

The company is Medinet Nasr Housing and Development, a highly profitable company with valuable assets in land and properties in a northeastern suburb of Cairo.

The state offered 400,000 shares at 65 pounds (\$19) each Sunday morning. By the evening, when the strong demand for the shares was apparent, a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Kamal Ganzouri decided to increase the offering to three million shares, 75 per cent of the company's equity.

The government has previously sold three state companies by private placement. In offerings to the public it has sold between 10

and 30 per cent of the equity in more than a dozen companies, leaving state holding companies in majority control.

But the case of Medinet Nasr is the first where private shareholders can wrest management of the company from the state by buying shares through the stock exchange.

Advocates of privatisation, fighting a tough battle for public opinion, have long clamoured for the state to let new managers show what they can do with the companies on offer.

"It's a historic day for the whole Egyptian economy and in the modern history of Egypt. It has very positive implications for the whole privatisation process," said Mr. Tahri.

"Now the shareholders can be confident that the managers will take the right business decisions," he added.

"Increasing the number of shares on offer indicates that the government is credible and serious about privatisation. Some people had suspected the holding companies wanted to maintain control of their subsidiaries," said Abdul Sattar Bakri, chairman of the Alexandria branch of the stock exchange.

Investors continued to apply for Medinet Nasr shares Monday and all indications were that the state could easily sell the three million shares. The government newspaper Al Akhbar said the offer was already 10 times oversubscribed.

Brokers said the company might be a special case because of its very high asset

value but this did not detract from the importance of the government's decision to give up control.

Medinet Nasr's assets in land and property could fetch some 1.5 billion pounds on the open market, almost six times the valuation implicit in the public offering.

"It just happened to be the company at hand at the right time. The pressure was there. If it wasn't for the decision to sell 75 per cent, I wouldn't be so optimistic," said Mr. Tahri.

The brokers noted that demand was also strong for last month's sale of shares in Central Egypt Flour Mills, the first privatisation since Dr. Ganzouri took office in January with promises to speed up the process.

They said it was too early to say how exactly a transfer of management would take place but big institutional investors would no doubt end up dominating the Medinet Nasr board.

One side effect of selling majority stakes through the stock exchange is that the government would find it difficult to impose conditions on the new owners, especially in the sensitive area of redundancies in the workforce.

But Mr. Tahri dismissed this possible obstacle. "Labour costs are very low and the private sector will be happy to help. There's no notion that they will not be cooperative," he said.

The brokers said the Medinet Nasr experience should encourage the government to be more bold about privatisation, which has fallen far behind successive targets.

Israel authorises entry of 10,000 more foreign workers

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Israeli government Sunday authorised the entry of 10,000 more foreign workers to take the place of Palestinians prohibited from entering the country since a spate of anti-Israel bombings.

Finance Minister Avraham Shohat and Housing Minister Benjamin Ben Eliezer asked for the new authorisations at Sunday's weekly cabinet meeting, arguing that the closure of the Palestinian territories ordered after the bombings was causing severe problems for sectors dependent on Palestinian manpower.

Officials said most of the

10,000 new foreign workers would come from Bulgaria and Romania and would take up jobs in the construction sector.

The military closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip has prevented some 60,000 Palestinians who had previously been authorised to work in Israel from reaching their jobs, mostly in the agriculture and construction industries. Another 40,000-50,000 day labourers entered Israel illegally each day to work before the clampdown.

Since the wave of suicide bombings by Palestinian radicals which killed 63 people from Feb. 25 to March 4, Israel has increased the number of work permits for foreigners by around 50,000.

The arrival of the latest batch will bring to about 100,000 the number of foreigners holding temporary work permits in Israel, primarily from Romania, Turkey, China, Thailand and Bulgaria. Another 100,000 foreigners are believed to be working in the country illegally.

In deciding to bring in another 10,000, Prime Minister Shimon Peres rejected the recommendations of Labour Minister Ora Namir who asked that the move be delayed for a month in hopes that an easing of the security situation would permit a return of Palestinian workers.

Qatar to invest \$27 billion in energy sector

DOHA (AFP) — The Gulf state of Qatar will invest around \$27 billion in projects to expand its oil and gas sector and increase revenue, the Qatari General Petroleum Corporation (QGPC) has said.

Around \$17.8 billion would come from foreign investors and the rest from the Qatari government, a QGPC report said.

The gas sector will have the lion's share, with an estimated investment of nearly \$14.2 billion, mostly in the liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry.

Qatar has embarked on massive projects to tap its North Field, the biggest single reservoir of natural gas in the world, with reserves of around 7.1 trillion cubic metres (236.6 trillion cubic feet).

It has already secured foreign partners and most of the funds and potential customers needed to get the projects off the ground.

Experts said the LNG ventures, which could

eventually produce around 20 million tonnes per year, would largely boost Qatar's income. Its income, mostly from export of crude oil and petrochemicals, is currently estimated at between \$2 and \$3 billion per year.

The QGPC report said around \$7.6 billion would be invested in projects to boost oil production capacity to more than 600,000 barrels per day (bpd) in 2000 from nearly 420,000 bpd at present.

It said Occidental, ARCO and other world oil firms had already committed to investing \$7.5 billion in the concession areas in the tiny Gulf OPEC producer.

The remaining investments would cover expansion of petrochemical and fertilizers production, the report said.

Qatar, with a population of around 500,000, has an OPEC output quota of 378,000 bpd and its crude reserves are estimated at 4.5 billion barrels.

Mideast peace would bring surge of tourism development

DUBAI (AFP) — Investment in tourism would grow at twice the world average if a full Middle East peace is achieved and pent-up demand for visits to holy sites and other attractions is released, an official said Monday.

"Under a peace scenario, the investment is forecast to grow at almost twice the world average," Geoffrey Lipman, president of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), told a conference in the Omani capital of Muscat.

"Travel and tourism globally invests between 10 and 11 per cent in its gross domestic product (GDP). In the

Middle East region it is currently between eight and nine per cent," Mr. Lipman was quoted by conference organisers as saying.

The WTTC forecasts between one and two million new jobs in the next 10 years.

"There are decades of pent-up demand, the focal point of three of the world's great religions, so much of mankind's cultural heritage, and at last, the ability to market these treasures across borders which have been closed for generations," he said.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, MAY 7, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Flight Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Try not to fall for some scheme early in the day today. Later, tonight you find the right way of gaining your aims through more knowledge and having been noticed by a bigwig who can help with your success.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Check and re-check some business matter today, or you could make a costly mistake. Later this evening, look into new interests which you are eager to engage in at this time for your success in the days ahead.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You should not permit a fellow associate to change arrangements already made between you and a bigwig. Carry through with your part of the deal so that any adverse conditions you encounter will be handled.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Things may go slowly at your career activities which may be discouraging to you today, however, conditions arise which can be of much assistance. Later tonight have some pleasant moments with your loved ones.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) An early conversation with your loved one can bring the right arrangements for the evening's activities. Take necessary health treatments so that you will be in peak physical condition for the days ahead.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Get away from home early today and avoid some possible difficulty there. Pay no attention to relatives who are overcritical about the method of operation in which you conduct your career activities.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Try not to make any unkind comments today to a fellow associate in the morning and safeguard your position in life. Later this evening you should take the advice of a knowledgeable individual to heart for your success.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Get rid of that temptation today to do something wrong in the morning. Later this evening, you can get correct information from those in charge for any new business venture which you are involved at this time.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You are not seeing things in their proper perspective today, so do not commit yourself to anything important at this time or you could find things difficult. Later tonight, you can be with close friends.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Stop all that anxiety today over some matter you can do nothing about. Make a plan which is practical and has the blessing of a knowledgeable individual who knows what techniques to use in being successful.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Handle routines quietly today and know better how to gain your fondest wishes. Enjoy the company of friends tonight and you will have good times while you are with those who you wish to see.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Be like Caesar's wife, above reproach today, and you save your reputation. The evening is best for furthering your aim by conducting your career activities in such a manner whereby you can be successful.

Birthingstone of May: Emerald — Chryse

FAO says 500 million malnourished in Asia-Pacific

RANGKOK (R) — Countries in Asia and the Pacific are still home to almost half a billion of the world's poorest, most malnourished and ill fed people, a senior United Nations official has said.

A.Z.M. Obaidullah Khan, regional representative of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), said: "We dare not forget that in

this most economically vibrant of regions 493 million people are still ill-fed."

"One person in five in our region does not get sufficient calories to lead a healthy active life," Mr. Khan said. "And 19 of FAO's 27 member states in Asia and the Pacific are low income, food deficit nations."

Mr. Khan said widening

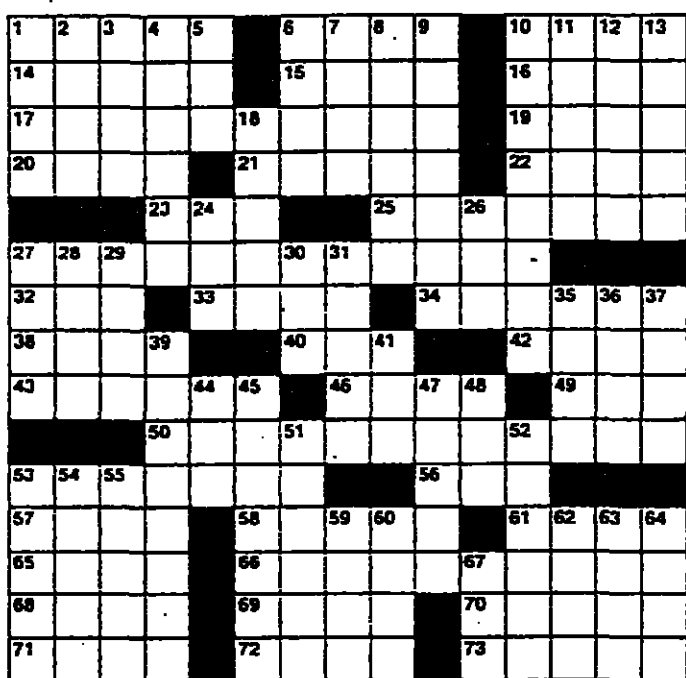
income gaps between the rich and the poor aggravated the hunger problem.

South East Asia over the past two decades has reduced the percentage of its undernourished people to 16 per cent from 44, he said. In the same period South Asia reduced its percentage of malnourished to 24 per cent from 34.

THE Daily Crossword by Virginia Yates

ACROSS

- 1 Bel —
- 6 Sound of yearning
- 10 Fancy marbles
- 14 — flu
- 15 Native dance
- 16 Feel compassion
- 17 Saved
- 19 "I — A Hammer"
- 20 Kind of jerk
- 21 "— house is his castle"
- 22 Far-reaching
- 23 Have
- 25 Rock hound's forte
- 27 Under wraps
- 32 Sward
- 33 Astronaut Slayton
- 34 Santa's reindeer
- 38 Psyche parts
- 40 Scamp
- 42 Clearance event
- 43 Quick raid
- 46 Yen
- 49 Transgression
- 50 Confidential
- 53 No get-up-and-go
- 56 Mountain
- 57 Crossbar
- 58 Takes a fling at
- 61 Gen. Robert
- 65 Entr — (intermission)
- 66 Unrehearsed
- 68 — Kojak (Savalas role)
- 69 Horse, of a sort
- 70 Chauvinist
- 71 Merit
- 72 Lady of Sp.
- 73 Suds



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DOWN

- 1 Barrel
- 2 "— shall bring forth —"
- 3 Heart-warming
- 4 Tackle
- 5 Undivided
- 6 Fake

- 7 Ames' state
- 8 Association of farmers
- 9 Rube
- 10 Like a Marx
- 11 Cold sound
- 12 Lashing blow
- 13 Like many river banks
- 18 — macabre
- 24 Unite
- 26 Gametes
- 27 Exploits
- 28 Notable possum
- 29 Bouquet
- 30 Emulate Alberto Tomba
- 31 Nocturnal tree dweller
- 35 Mince
- 36 Lamb name
- 37 Let
- 38 Caviar source
- 41 Golf teacher
- 44 CD income
- 45 Film splicers, e.g.

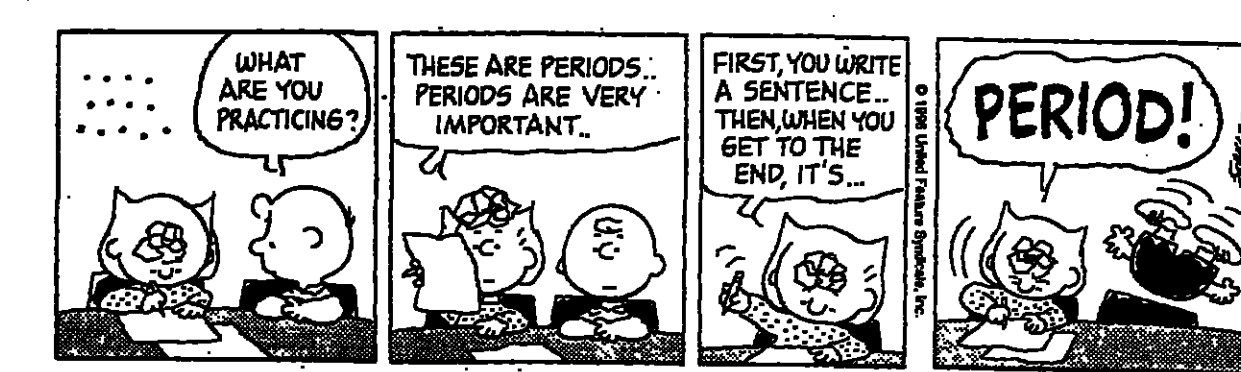
GLIB SAILA ALAMB
EATTA EGIOS MARIA
AVIES REDPEPPERS
RAIRE INIG SESTET
MEADIE CREERIE
PIATTELLA MAE
ASIONE RIP ELIBA
WHITETALLEDDER
NEITIS UNO OUTRE
SPY HEPICATS
BEGONE MEDIEA
ANODAL ASE TAKE
BIUEPOINTS IREX
EARTO TIES OLPE
SIDON SARA NETS

- 47 Grind, as teeth
- 48 Grog
- 51 An — music
- 52 Coin
- 53 Boiling
- 54 Nape
- 55 Sign up
- 59 "— first you don't succeed..."
- 60 Sicilian peak
- 62 Bobbed cousin
- 63 An — effort
- 64 News
- 67 Decline

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Jordan bank profits in 1995 rise on higher yields

By Saleem Al Khalidi
Amman — Jordan's banking sector profits rose in 1995 as major banks posted higher yields but smaller investment banks were hit by higher costs and a stock market decline, bankers said Monday.

They said 1995 was a better year for overall profitability due to some banks realising capital gains, placing cash in high-yield central bank debt and higher lending, especially by the bigger banks.

"Major factors for banks' better profitability was keeping less liquidity and investing with higher

interest rates with the central bank instruments, along with growth in total operations," said Mifteh Agel, senior banker in Arab Bank.

So far 10 banks have posted 75,950 million dinars (\$107 million) of pre-tax profits in 1995, compared to 45,950 million dinars last year. The total pre-tax profits of all Jordan's 21 commercial banks last year was 65,000 million dinars.

For Jordanian banks with large operations in the West Bank and Gaza — such as Arab Bank, Cairo Amman Bank and Bank of Jordan — tapping cheap funds in the self-rule areas raised deposits and revenue.

Hani Al Qadi, senior deputy general manager of Arab Jordan Investment Bank said a tight monetary policy to bolster the dinar cut interest margins on project finance.

Interest rates on dinar deposits rose an average 1.5 percentage point during 1995 to around 9.0 per cent while lending rates hovered in a 12-13 per cent range.

Officially inflation was kept at a steady three per cent in 1995, though economists estimated it reached as high as eight per cent.

While the high interest rate policy has helped divert dollars into dinars, it has tied

up dinars in high yield central bank public debt instruments, leaving less money for borrowing.

Though lending grew 16 per cent to 3,705 billion dinars, dinar deposits grew only four per cent, further squeezing liquidity.

The banking sector, however, as a whole maintained steady growth with total deposits — in foreign currency and dinar — rising to 5,787 billion dinars at end-1995 from 5,391 billion dinars in 1994.

Foreign currency deposits rose 13 per cent to the equivalent of 1,498 billion dinars at end of 1995.

Bankers say 1996 will not be as good.

"The factors that enhanced 1995 profitability will not have the same effect on 1996 profitability," said Mr. Agel.

Among the 21 commercial banks, including six investment banks, smaller banks generally fared worse than the five major banks — Arab Bank, Housing Bank, Jordan Islamic Bank, Cairo Amman Bank and Bank of Jordan.

These five accounted for 70 per cent of the banking sector's total assets at the end of 1995. The sector's assets totalled 8,430 billion dinars at end-1995, up 12 per cent

from a year before.

Profits at many investment banks were squeezed in 1995 as continued decline in the Amman Financial Market helped depress trading profits.

Although rules on investing 50 per cent of banks' foreign currency deposits in low-risk instruments have been eased, remaining foreign exchange controls hamper investment banks, bankers say.

The restrictions concerning investment in new products in international capital markets were not in line with hand with the central bank's liberalisation policy, Mr. Qadi said.

Arab Gulf states to expand aluminium output to 1.5m tonnes

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf states are expanding their aluminium plants and planning new smelters to double their production to around 1.5 million tonnes per year, an official study has said.

The region's two smelters in Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) currently produce around 700,000 tonnes of aluminium per year but capacity is set to exceed 800,000 tonnes with further expansions, according to the Doha-based Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consulting (GOIC).

In Qatar, plans are under way to set up a smelter with a production capacity of between 180,000 tonnes and 360,000 tonnes at a cost of up to \$1 billion, GOIC said in a study published in Al Taawun magazine, the quarterly bulletin of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

The study, obtained here, said Qatar has started executive measures to launch the project, including the selection of "potential" partners.

Another smelter is planned in Yanbu, Saudi Arabia, with an output capacity of around 214,000 tonnes per year, the study said, adding initial costs had been estimated at nearly \$900 million.

It said the smelter would cover local demand and foreign markets and would be owned by the Jeddah-based Lujain Company, a private Saudi venture.

The Saudi Arabian Basic Industries Corporation, one of the biggest petrochemical producers in the world, is also considering building an aluminium plant with a capacity of around 180,000 tonnes per year.

"Such projects, coupled

with planned expansions at the Bahrain and UAE smelters, will push overall Gulf aluminium production capacity to around 1.5 million tonnes per year and enable such an industry in the GCC to occupy a prominent place on the world map," the study said.

Experts said the expansions and the new aluminium projects would allow GCC states to cut their import bill and boost revenues, which are heavily reliant on volatile oil earnings. They put current GCC aluminium earnings at more than \$930 million per year, mostly from the Bahraini and UAE smelters.

The six members — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait and the UAE — have invested around \$4.5 billion in the two smelters and nearly 400 other small aluminium manufacturing units as part of their attempts to diversify their economies and ease reliance on oil export income.

The investments, mostly by the public sector, account for more than 10 per cent of the total capital in the non-oil industrial sector while the aluminium industry contributes around 10 per cent of the gross domestic product of the sector, according to official estimates.

Alba smelter in Bahrain is the biggest aluminium plant in the Middle East, with a production capacity of around 460,000 tonnes per year, which is projected to exceed 500,000 tonnes within four years after expansion.

The UAE smelter in Dubai is the second largest, with an annual output of around 240,000 tonnes, to be raised to nearly 350,000 tonnes per year.

DAILY BEAT

A review of news from the Arabic press

Intermediate Petrochemical Industries posts another loss in 1995

★ A SHARP drop in sales from JD 5.8 million in 1994 to JD 3.11 million in 1995 resulted in the Intermediate Petrochemical Industries Company (IPIC) posting a JD 260,300 loss last year and bringing up the accumulated losses to about JD 398,400. Board Chairman Ramez Mallees attributed the decline in sales to a slump in activity in the local and traditional markets and to prices of basic and intermediate petrochemicals which were rising continuously until mid 1995 when it gradually began to retreat only to rise again by the end of the year. Mr. Mallees told the general assembly that the company had invested JD 850,000 in a venture with Hoechst Group to produce all types of "coloured plastics." This venture was registered as a private limited shareholding company with a JD 1 million capital which was shared with the agents of Hoechst in Jordan who have paid the remaining JD 150,000 stake in the new company. According to Mr. Mallees, the new company, which have sales concession in Jordan, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Iraq, has started importing the necessary equipment and laboratory apparatus to begin its operations in the near future.

Financial results appearing in the IPIC annual report show local sales plunging to JD 2.8 million from JD 5.3 million in 1994 and exports going down to JD 248,316 from JD 428,211, a 42 per cent fall. Total assets stood at JD 8.8 million of which JD 4.5 million were current assets (JD 4.8 million in 1994). Current liabilities increased by 11 per cent to JD 3.6 million compared to JD 3.27 million in the preceding year (Al Ra'i + Al Dustour).

Jordan Chemical Industries to distribute dividends at a rate of 20 per cent

★ DIVIDENDS AT a rate of 20 per cent are to be distributed by the Jordan Chemical Industries Company which generated a JD 435,600 net profit last year. The company earned JD 2.38 in net sales last year, 11.5 per cent higher than the amount earned in 1994. Total assets, according to the annual report, stood at JD 3.05 million at the end of 1995. Chairman Mohammad Al Taher told the general assembly that the company's future plan focuses on completing the expansion project and on increasing sales. He indicated that supplies of raw materials inputs have steadied noting that they were obtained locally from the National Chlorine Company, a sister entity of the Jordan Chemical Industries (Al Ra'i + Al Awsaq).

Universal Modern Industries earn JD 42.3 million from sales in 1995

★ SALES AMOUNTING to 60,554 tonnes and valued at JD 42.3 million were posted by the Universal Modern Industries Company last year. The earnings have yielded a JD 1.98 million net profit of which JD 1 million will be distributed in dividends to shareholders at a rate of 20 per cent. Exports to Iraq accounted for 42,000 tonnes valued at JD 34 million of the total sales last year and exports to Iraq are expected to be also large in 1996 as the company has signed an agreement to supply Iraq with 14,000 tonnes of vegetable oil this year. Chairman Awni Al Saket told the general assembly that the amount was the largest given to any vegetable oil producing company in Jordan after the decrease of the trade protocol with Baghdad from the beginning of 1996. He hinted that with six companies engaged in the same line of business, competition was getting sharper and, as such, the company was seeking to open new markets, especially in North Asia. According to the annual report, the company's receivables total JD 3.03 million and bank credit amount to JD 1.6 million (Al Ra'i + Al Awsaq).

Financial Markets

in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

Currency	New York Close Dec 31/95	Singapore Close Dec 6/95
US Dollar	1.5080	1.5082
Deutsche Mark	1.5253	1.5242
Swiss Franc	1.2426	1.2406
French Franc	5.1543	5.1527
Japanese Yen	105.09	108.92
European Currency Unit	1.2310	1.2325

1 US \$ = 100 J.O.D.
* European Opening @ 8:00 a.m. GMT

Inter-currency Interest Rates
Date: 6/5/1996

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTH	6 MTH	12 MTH
U.S. Dollar	5.18	5.25	5.38	5.68
US Dollar	5.81	5.81	5.88	6.25
Deutsche Mark	3.12	3.06	3.00	3.12
Swiss Franc	1.75	1.69	1.69	1.71
French Franc	5.74	5.78	5.80	5.95
Japanese Yen	0.37	0.44	0.62	0.94
European Currency Unit	4.40	4.25	4.20	4.37

Interest rates for deposits exceeding US Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.
Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin
Date: 6/5/1996

Other Currencies
Date: 6/5/1996

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7080	0.7100
US Dollar	1.0661	1.0714
Deutsche Mark	0.4661	0.4664
Swiss Franc	0.5701	0.5730
French Franc	0.1373	0.1380
Japanese Yen	0.6740	0.6774
Dutch Guilder	0.4155	0.4176
Swedish Krona	0.0455	0.0455
Hallian Lira	0.0455	0.0455
Belgian Franc	0.0455	0.0455

* Per 100

Other Currencies
Date: 6/5/1996

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8620	1.8780
Lebanese Lira	0.044385	0.045000
Saudi Riyal	0.1870	0.1895
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3070	2.3670
Omani Riyal	0.1932	0.1945
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2100
Qatari Riyal	1.6330	1.6470
UAE Dirham	0.1922	0.1935
Greek Drachma	0.2815	0.3088
Cypriot Pound	1.4725	1.5155

* Per 100

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET
HOUSING BANK CENTER, AMMAN - JORDAN
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 06/05/1996

PAGE	12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
250.000	202.000	ARAB BANK	12.3	1.96	7	340	76190	224.50	224.00	-0.50
4.880	4.180	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.6	3.12	10	4304	19320	4.49	4.49	-
1.850	3.280	HABE CO. JORDAN	12.6	0.00	5	1800	6235	3.45	3.49	+0.04
2.900	2.350	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	3.8	8.43	9	3350	7800	2.41	2.40	-0.01
8.380	4.250	THE HOUSING BK.	12.0	3.07	6	3166	14247	4.50	4.50	-
1.540	2.600	JOR. KUALAT BANK	20.6	0.00	14	1944	5479	2.80	2.84	+0.04
3.090	0.920	JOR. GULF BANK	8.8	0.00	40	13982	36102	1.07	1.07	-
4.100	3.300	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	19.5	2.99	18	7000	28246	4.05	4.02	-0.03
4.450	2.660	THE BUSINESS BK.	12.2	0.00	1	500	1275	2.66	2.65	-0.01
4.450	3.300	JOR. INV. MGMT. BANK	19.3	0.00	1	5000	17800	3.58	3.66	+0.08
4.240	2.470	SELT AL-HAL. (SEITWA)	1.5	6.12	1	150	368	2.48	2.45	-0.03
1.390	0.520	AMMAN BANK INV.	9	0.00	17	23800	12555	1.53	1.52	-0.01
1.930	1.070	PHILADEL. INV. INC.	9	0.00	8	3250	4304	1.38	1.33	-0.05
BANK SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 179.37 %CHG: -0.19 137 68586 229920										
2.910	2.450	JOR. FREESH. INSUR.	6.8	0.30	3	380	846	2.45	2.41	-0.04
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 123.66 %CHG: -0.20 3 350 846										
1.960	1.930	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	11.4	7.27	19	8243	13825	1.64	1.65	+0.01
3.050	2.510	SHIPPING LINES	5.5	7.42	1	250	675	2.71	2.70	-0.01
3.180	0.900	REAL ESTATE INV.	22.0	3.21	1	8000	7920	0.99	0.99	-
1.700	1.700	MTD. EAST ROADS	91.8	0.00	8	9780	14413	2.15	2.13	-0.02
3.660	3.090	ANAB INTEL. INV. EDUC.	12.7	6.23	3	9780	12210	3.22	3.21	-0.01
1.320	1.000	JORDAN REPAIR. INV.	9	4.95	1	250	275	1.07	1.10	+0.03
1.610	1.000	JORDAN EDUCATION	9	0.00	1	1000	1000	1.01	1.00	-0.01
2.600	1.870	UNIFIED CO.	10.8	4.86	4	1600	3280	2.05	2.05	-
1.500	0.950	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	28	16900	38772	1.11	1.12	+0.01
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 120.86 %CHG: -0.07 68 46758 71968										
1.630	1.140	ATTACHMENT	72.0	0.00	4	8800	7250	1.25	1.25	-
1.120	3.390	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	20.7	2.76	19	8880	31328	1.60	1.62	+0.02
3.750	2.700	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	33.9	0.00	3	1180	3618	3.12	3.15	+0.03
6.020	4.750	ARAB POTASH CO.	16.2	3.74	1	100	535	5.35	5.35	-
11.130	8.900	JOR. PETROL REFINERY	13.5	5.99	7	947	9550	10.10	10.08	-0.02
1.420	1.400	WOODEN INDUSTRIES	17.1	3.77	2	6000	9840	1.69	1.69	-
8.870	1.780	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	21.8	5.04	9	1322	5279	4.09	3.97	-0.12
2.640	1.630	RAVIA INDUSTRIES	9	0.00	1	2000	3400	1.70	1.70	-
6.700	5.050	ARAB ALUM. IND.	8.4	7.35	6	825	4372	5.37	5.30	-0.07
1.740	0.850	LIVERPOOL & POULTRY	9	0.00	113	20250	19306	0.87	0.89	+0.02
1.390	1.350	JORDAN FRUIT CONV. TRD.	10.5	7.41	23	21400	29166	1.37	1.35	-0.02
1.450	0.880	NATIONAL IND.	12.9	6.90	24	112250	95687	0.89	0.87	-0.02
2.950	1.060	INTERMED. PETRO. CHNM.	9	0.00	33	8400	10803	1.32	1.29	-0.03
1.340	0.830	JOR. ROYALTY IND.	9	0.00	8	2600	2643	1.06	1.03	-0.03
3.650	0.950	JOR. SULPHUR-CHRM.	9	0.00	3	850	637	1.00	0.98	-0.02
2.480	2.440	UNIV. MOH. IND.	7.4	8.16	6	2500	6440	2.49	2.45	-0.04
2.480	1.380	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	21.5	0.00	22	7100	12188	1.75	1.71	-0.04
2.200	1.000	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	31.2	0.00	2	500	575	1.16	1.15	-0.01
2.820	1.980	EL. WAY READY WEAR	8	0.00	30	9388	20472	2.26	2.18	-0.08
1.670	1.180	UNIV. TOBACCO	28	0.00	25	15630	20309	1.34	1.30	-0.04
2.660	1.180	UNION CR. & VES. B.	24.2	0.00	8	1700	2352	1.38	1.39	+0.01
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 117.42 %CHG: -0.09 348 412270 396147										
GRAND TOTAL										
INDEX: 140.33 %CHG: -0.15 856 547973 698881										
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 06/05/1996										
1.840	0.700	JOR. TRADE FAG.	19.7	0.00	6	8780	4025	1.75	1.75	-
1.000	0.760	UNION INV. SOC.	87.7	0.00	9	5560	1782	0.83	0.82	-0.01
1.990	0.630	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	7	0.00	16	8590	6843	0.83	0.80	-0.03
0.760	0.340	JOR. INDUS. MATCH-JENCO	9	0.00	1	200	108	0.81	0.54	-0.27
1.240	0.630	ARAB FOOD & MED.	2	0.00	2	2500	2700	1.00	1.00	-
1.380	1.380	UNION CR. & VES. B.	9	0.00	26	12850	21140	1.67	1.63	-0.04
1.100	0.700	BALE. MATH. JEN. MATHCO	2	0.00	18	11950	9605	0.82	0.80	-0.02
1.250	0.800	JORDAN STEEL	2	0.00	8	5300	5035	0.96	0.95	-0.01
1.070	0.600	ARAB SELECT. INDUS.	2	0.00	1	250	158	0.64	0.63	-0.01
1.030	0.570	BAHMAN TRADING FIRM	2	0.00	11	850	618	0.69	0.69	-
1.020	0.400	UNION ROYALTY 75%	18	0.00	18	22400	22814	1.25	1.24	-0.01
1.030	0.680	RAZI PHARM. SOC.	2	0.00	5	1700	340	0.70	0.70	-
0.970	0.570	INDS. ENG.	20.7	0.00	7	2700	1684	0.63	0.61	-0.02
1.020	0.880	INDS. CHEM.	2	0.00	6	27150	21048	0.68	0.68	-
1.020	0.400	UNION CR. & VES. B.	2	0.00	1	200	116	0.55	0.58	+0.03
1.020	0.600	PEARL CAR. P. CORV.	9	0.00	6	3990	2637	0.69	0.67	-0.02
1.500	0.700	MTD. EAST COMPLEX	27.9	0.00	12	7200	5400	0.76	0.75	-0.01
GRAND TOTAL										
INDEX: 154.33 %CHG: -0.15 154 318485 295310										

Alami wins 1st ATP Tour title

ATLANTA (R) — Karim Alami of Morocco claimed his first ATP tour title by beating Nicklas Kulti of Sweden 6-3, 6-4 in Sunday's final of the \$328,000 ATT challenge men's clay court tennis tournament.

"My goal this year was to win an ATP Tour tournament," said the 22-year-old Alami, who was ranked 78th. "This is the next step I needed to take to reach a higher level."

Alami, whose only other previous appearance in an ATP final came in his hometown of Casablanca in 1994, won a first prize of \$43,000. Kulti collected \$25,300.

Alami lost his serve in the first game of the match but got back on track by breaking Kulti in the sixth game as he pressured the Swede's serve by continually rushing the net.

The Moroccan broke Kulti again in the eighth game with a daring drop volley. Alami was the aggressor all afternoon, putting constant pressure on Kulti's serve.

In the second set, Alami continued to charge the net on the Swede's serve. In the seventh game, which lasted 20 points, Kulti was forced to save three break points.

After holding serve in the next game, Alami gambled on winners from the baseline

and sharply angled volleys to force a decisive break. On his third break point, the Moroccan hit a service return winner crosscourt to secure the break.

"The difference today was that I concentrated very well on the important points," said Alami, who upset top-seeded defending champion Michael Chang, the world number four, in Saturday's semifinals.

"Beating a top five player gave me a lot of confidence going into today's final, and he was not serving well," Alami said. "I felt if I concentrated on his service games, I could pressure him into some mistakes. I knew that if I got one or two break points on him, it would be difficult for him."

Kulti agreed that his faulty serve was the key.

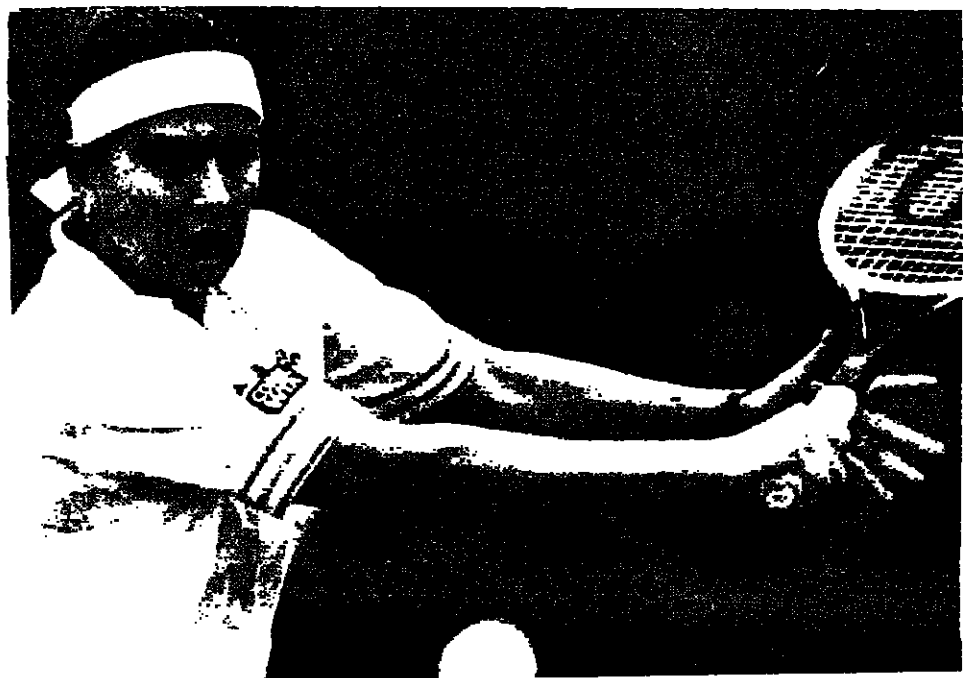
"I try to play aggressive from the baseline. I normally use my serve to set up points and open up the court, but I was not able to do that today," he said.

The crowd of 7,460 clearly threw their support to the athletic Alami.

"It was great to have the fans behind me," he said. "I play better when I am creating shots on the court and having fun, and they made it a fun week."

Men's ATP tennis world rankings released Monday:

1. Pete Sampras (USA)	4611 Pts	11. Marcelo Rios (Chl)	1805
2. Thomas Muster (Aut)	4415	12. Sergi Bruguera (Spa)	1635
3. Andre Agassi (USA)	3917	13. Armand Boetsch (Fra)	1603
4. Michael Chang (USA)	3645	14. Marc Rostet (Svi)	1495
5. Boris Becker (Ger)	3489	15. Alberto Costa (Spa)	1428
6. Goran Ivanisevic (Cro)	3256	16. MaliVai Washington (USA)	1402
7. Yevgeny Kafelnikov (Rus)	2446	17. Michael Stich (Ger)	1401
8. Thomas Enqvist (Swe)	2334	18. Andrei Medvedev (Ukr)	1390
9. Jim Courier (USA)	2241	19. Todd Martin (USA)	1332
10. Wayne Ferreira (Res)	1830	20. Cedric Pioline (Fra)	1284



Conchita Martinez

Sanchez-Vicario back at No.2

HAMBURG (AP) — Spain's Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario regained her world No. 2 ranking by rallying in gusting winds Sunday to win the Rexona Cup in three sets against Conchita Martinez.

Martinez, the defending champion, led in the second set tie break at 4-2 before she fell apart at the \$450,000 tournament. Sanchez-Vicario then swept to a 4-6, 7-6 (7-4), 6-0 win.

Sanchez-Vicario, who won the tournament for the third time, will reclaim her spot as world No. 2 from Martinez in next week's ranking, just one week after her compatriot had wrestled the spot away.

Martinez appeared to have her first title of 1996 in hand when she led 4-1 in the second set, using her forehand to pile up winners, as both players struggled against wind gusts.

But Sanchez-Vicario, renowned for her fighting spirit, turned the match around two games later with an aggressive streak, rushing the net to break the 1994 Wimbledon winner's serve.

Martinez's erratic play in the tie-breaker cost her the ninth loss in 12 career meetings against her compatriot. Sanchez-Vicario trailed 4-2, but rattled off five straight points to force a third set.

Martinez appeared dispirited in the final lopsided set, allowing Sanchez-Vicario to coast to her 24th career title.

The match was a highlight of a lackluster tournament, plagued by cold weather. Without German stars Steffi Graf and Anke Huber as a draw, attendance was also down.

For this reason, the promoters are considering combining the tournament with the men's German Open, which usually begins the following week on the Rothenbaum Courts. That change could take place in 1997.

Sanchez-Vicario took home \$79,000 for her victory, while Martinez won \$38,500.

37 participants in Jordan International Rally

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Thirty seven participants make up the entry list of the 14th Jordan International Rally which will be held May 16 and 17 as the second round of the Middle East Rally Championship.

Organisers, the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan (RACJ), Monday announced the entry list topped by last year's winner Abdullah Bakhshab of Saudi Arabia and five time champion Mohammad Bin Sulayem of the United Arab Emirates. Both drivers are in contention for the Middle East title and Bin Sulayem has already clinched the first rally of the season after winning the UAE Abu Dhabi rally earlier in the year.

Eighteen Jordanian drivers are also taking part led by 1995 Jordan Drivers Open champion Mohammad Al Daoud in a new Ford Escort Cosworth, former champs Bashir Bustami and Amjad Farrah, and Marouf Abu Samra in a Ford Sierra Cosworth. Abu Samra scored the best Jordanian result in last year's international by taking third place.

Competitors represent Cyprus, Qatar, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Australia, Bahrain, France, Kuwait, Great Britain, Germany and Jordan.

Twenty six cars started the Jordan Rally last year and 15 including six out of



1995 Jordan Drivers Open champion Mohammad Al Daoud in action during last year's international rally

Jordan Rally record

1981	Michel Sadeh/Libana	Toyota Celica GT
1982	Michel Sadeh/Libana	Toyota Celica GT
1983	Saad Al Hajj/Qatar	Opel Astra 400
1984	Mohd Bin Sulayem/UAE	Toyota Celica Turbo
1985	Saad Al Hajj/Qatar	Porsche 911 SCRS
1986	Saad Al Hajj/Qatar	Porsche 911 SCRS
1987	Mohd Bin Sulayem/UAE	Toyota Celica Turbo
1988	Mohd Bin Sulayem/UAE	Toyota Celica Turbo
1989	Mohd Bin Sulayem/UAE	Toyota Celica GT 4
1990	Abbas Mawardi/Qatar	Toyota Celica GT 4
1991	Sheikh Humad Al Thani/Qatar	Mitsubishi Galant VR6
1992	Mohd Bin Sulayem/UAE	Ford Escort RS Cosworth
1993	Abdullah Bakhshab/S. Arabia	Ford Escort Cosworth

ENTRANTS STARTERS FINISHERS

YEAR	ENTRANTS	STARTERS	FINISHERS
1981	36	34	13
1982	29	27	17
1983	30	25	6
1984	31	29	12
1985	38	35	15
1986	50	40	15
1987	48	38	19
1988	36	32	10
1989	40	32	15
1990	41	36	15
1991	39	36	13
1992	46	38	22
1993	36	26	15

14 participating Jordanians finished. The winner, Bakhshab, in a Ford Escort Cosworth set a Jordan Rally record of winning every single stage of the 868

kilometre-long 14-stage event.

For the second year running, the Jordan International Rally will again be

held on all desert tracks avoiding asphalt stages and areas of population and agriculture development. This decision was taken by

RACJ following considerable problems in the '94 and '93 rallies when fans disrupted some stages by hurling rocks at cars and rally marshals.

'Ma's army' routed at Olympic trials

BEIJING (AP) — Their controversial coach hospitalised with a serious intestinal ailment, Ma Junren's team of world class runners were in poor form at Olympic trials being held in the southern city of Nanjing.

Wang Junxia, a former member of "Ma's army" of medium- and long-distance runners, meanwhile, set the fastest time this year for the 5,000 metres, finishing at 14:51.87, the official Xinhua news agency reported.

Wang, who took the 10,000-metre gold medal at world championships in 1993 and set a world record of 29:31.78 a month later in the same event, led the pace throughout Sunday's race.

Coach Ma has been hospitalised in Beijing for several months with intestinal bleeding. His doctors denied rumours he is suffering from cancer.

It is unclear if the assistant coach now training his runners has continued with the regimen of high-altitude training, daily marathons and concoctions of Chinese herbs that brought Ma to fame in 1993, when his runners demolished several world records.

Barcelona's hopes all but disappear

PARIS (AFP) — Barcelona's hopes of catching Spanish first division leaders Atletico Madrid all but disappeared at the weekend when they were held to a disappointing 1-1 home draw by lowly Sevilla.

With just three matches left to play, Johan Cruyff's side are now down in third place — one point behind Valencia and five points adrift of Atletico.

French first division pacemakers Auxerre came back to beat "Cinderella" opponents Nimes 2-1 in the French Cup final Saturday night. But their manager, Guy Roux, made it clear that celebrations would have to wait for another fortnight while the side continue to chase the league and cup "double."

UEFA Cup finalists Bayern Munich kept up their challenge for the Bundesliga title with a 3-2 home victory over mid-table Cologne. They joined Dortmund on 61 points from 31 matches but Dortmund, who have the better goal difference, continued to set the pace with a 5-0 victory over bottom club Uerdingen.

In Italy, Sampdoria brought Italy's newly-crowned champions AC Milan crashing down to earth by inflicting a 3-0 drubbing in Genoa. It was the second setback this week for Milan, whose coach Fabio Capello announced he was moving to Real Madrid after failing to agree a new contract with the club. Milan also has defensive Lynchpin Paolo Maldini stretched off and taken to hospital for tests after colliding with his own goalkeeper Sebastiano Rossi. He was discharged after treatment.

Barcelona were rocketed back on their heels after just 23 minutes in the Nou Camp Stadium when Gabriel Moya was on target with a fierce shot from just outside the box and they had to wait until after the break for their skipper Jose Maria Bakero to put them back on level terms.



Barcelona's Portuguese striker Luis Filipe Figo (left) battles for the ball with Sevilla defender Victor Javier Ferreras during the match

Spanish first division soccer match in Barcelona Nou Camp stadium May 5 (Reuters photo)

Both Atletico, who are for their first league title in 19 years, and Valencia won their matches on Saturday. Atletico beat Compostela 3-1 away and Valencia defeated visiting Sporting Gijon 1-0.

Fourth-placed Espanyol moved closer to a UEFA Cup place next season by snatching an entertaining 3-2 win at Real Betis, and Real Madrid also kept their hopes of entering the competition alive by climbing to sixth place in the standings after defeating Deportivo 1-0. Tenerife could keep Real Madrid out of Europe next season, however. They

stayed in fifth place and four points clear of Real after defeating Real Sociedad 1-0 — thanks to a second-half goal by Juan Pizzi.

The day's biggest surprise was provided by bottom club Salamanca. But despite their 5-0 win over Racing Santander they were still unable to stave off relegation to division two.

France's most successful manager Guy Roux said after Auxerre's Cup victory: "We played at Guingamp next Saturday and then face Nantes in the last league match of the season and our players are intelligent professionals."

They have agreed to postpone any celebrations until May 18.

Auxerre, currently three points clear of Metz and four points ahead of Paris St. Germain in the first division title race, were rocked back on their heels by the relegation-threatened third division Nimes.

Auxerre's only previous cup win came in 1994 when they beat Montpellier 3-0 while Nimes have now lost in the final three times.

If Auxerre clinch the French title, Nimes will play in next season's European Cup Winners' Cup.

Major League results

NEW YORK (R) — Results of Major League Baseball games on Sunday:

American League			
Toronto	11	Boston	4
Texas	3	Detroit	2
Milwaukee	13	Baltimore	1
New York	7	Chicago	1
Kansas City	2	Oakland	0
California	5	Minnesota	1
Cleveland	2	Seattle	0
National League			
Atlanta	11	Philadelphia	3
Pittsburgh	4	Los Angeles	2
Chicago	5	New York	4
Montreal	5	Houston	0
Colorado	5	Florida	4
San Diego	10	St. Louis	4
Cincinnati	12	San Francisco	9

Armstrong extends lead

ROANOKE, Virginia (R) — Lance Armstrong won his third stage and increased his race lead by 26 seconds Sunday as inclement weather and a race official's extraordinary decision helped determine the fifth stage of the Tour DuPont.

While heavy rain and hail fell during the final nine miles (15 km), Armstrong came around teammate Axel Merckx of Belgium with about 100 metres left and won the 112.5-mile (181.1-km) Mt. Airy to Roanoke road race in 4 hours 41 minutes 19 seconds.

Jean Cyrille Robin of France was second and Federico

Echave of Spain placed third, both in the same time.

The rain caused several crashes in the Wangling Mills, including a spill to Tony Rominger of Switzerland. The reigning Tour of Italy winner fell with two other cyclists with about a mile (1.6 km) left and eventually finished 1 minute 8 seconds behind the leading American.

Rominger began the day in second place, trailing the defending champion by 35 seconds. But officials ruled that world's number two ranked cyclist should be given the same time as a trailing group, 16 seconds behind.

TODAY AT PHILADELPHIA Alec Baldwin in The Shadow Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45	PLAZA *ESCAPE TO THE TOP (Arabic) Shows: 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 * Toy Story Shows: 12:30, 2, 3:30, 5	CONCORD CONCORD "1" * UNDER SIEGE "2" Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 * Ace Ventura "2" Shows: 2, 5:15 CONCORD "2" HEATE Shows: 3:15, 6:15, 9:15	Amman Theatre & Cinema TEL: 618274 - 618275 Antonio Banderas & Salma Hayek in Desperado Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155 PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights Starts Monday, May 13 at 8:30 p.m. For reservation please call 625155 - 640155
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Chelsea's Rudi Gullit (left) jumps over a challenge from Tim Sherwood of Blackburn Rovers during their final Premier League match at Stamford Bridge on May 5 (Reuters photo)

Manchester United wins English Premier League title

LONDON (AP) — Manchester United clinched its third league title in four years Sunday by winning 3-0 at Middlesbrough while rival Newcastle could only draw 1-1 with Tottenham.

Defender David May scored his first of the season, Andy Cole, a former Newcastle player, netted only 30 seconds after entering the game as a second half substitute, and Ryan Giggs fired home a 25-yard left-footer to give Alex Ferguson's team a victory at Middlesbrough.

Seconds after Cole's goal at the Riverside Stadium, Tottenham went ahead at Newcastle through Jason Dozzell. Les Ferdinand scored a leveller for the Magpies 19 minutes from the end. The result means that Manchester United finished with 82 points from the 38 games and Newcastle, which once had a 12-point lead, had 78.

Manchester United also has a chance of making history next week if it beats Liverpool in the FA Cup final and becomes the first team to complete the League and Cup double twice.

"It's the hardest league in the world to win," Ferguson said after his team had collected the trophy again. "It took a long time to win it but we had a tremendous run, winning 16 out of 17 games to put us back in the frame."

Newcastle manager Kevin Keegan saluted Ferguson's team for its success. "I congratulate Manchester United and their fans on their success. They did tremendously well to catch us. Everybody talks about our collapse but you have got to give credit to Manchester United and their young players," Keegan said.

"We are still trying to build a team as good as they are and we're very close now."

At the Riverside Stadium, Neil Cox and Nicky Barnby both missed first half chances for Middlesbrough but may found the target for United when he scored with a downward header from Ryan Giggs' 14th-minute corner.

Nine minutes into the second half, Ferguson sent on out-of-form Cole as a substitute and he scored with his first touch 30 seconds after entering the game. Cole, who had been dropped after a series of poor performances, scored with a spectacular overhead kick from Giggs' corner.

Giggs made sure of the points with a spectacular strike 10 minutes from the end, firing home from 25 yards after a run through midfield.

Dozzell turned Newcastle defenders before shooting Spurs ahead at St. James' Park in the 55th minute but Ferdinand powered home his 29th goal of the season in the 71st.

While Manchester United celebrated, there was gloom for neighbour Manchester City which was relegated from the Premier League along with Queens Park Rangers and Bolton after a 2-2 tie with Liverpool.

Liverpool raced into a two-goal lead through an own goal by Steve Lomas and a strike by Ian Rush on his final appearance for the club. City hit back to tie with a penalty from German striker Uwe Rosler and an equaliser from Welsh international Kit Symons but other results didn't help.

City finished level on points with the two teams above. Southampton and Coventry, but went down because of an inferior goal difference. Coventry tied 0-0 with Leeds and Southampton



Manchester United captain Steve Bruce holds aloft the FA Cup trophy after winning the final at Wembley (Reuters photo)

gained the same scoreline at home to Wimbledon.

Arsenal hit back to beat last place Bolton 2-1 with goals from David Platt and Dutch striker Dennis Bergkamp to earn a UEFA Cup place by staying fifth.

Fourth place Aston Villa, which also is in the UEFA Cup after winning the League Cup, tumbled 1-0 at Everton, whose scorer was Joe Parkinson. Everton moved up to sixth.

English and Scottish league soccer's champions, promotions, relegations and play-offs after Sunday's matches:

★ English Premier League

Champions — Manchester United

Qualified for European competition: Manchester United, Newcastle, Liverpool, Aston Villa, Arsenal

Relegated: Bolton, Queens Park Rangers, Manchester City

★ English first division

Champions — Sunderland

Also promoted — Derby

Play-offs (for promotion): Crystal Palace, Stoke, Leicester, Charlton

Relegated: Luton, Watford, Millwall

★ English second division

Champions — Swindon

Also promoted — Oxford

Play-offs (for promotion): Blackpool, Notts County, Crewe, Bradford

Relegated — Hull, Brighton, Swansea plus Carlisle or York

★ English third division

Champions — Preston

Also promoted — Gillingham, Bury

Play-offs (for promotion) — Plymouth, Darlington, Hereford, Colchester

Bottom: Torquay

★ Scottish premier division:

Champions — Rangers

Relegated — Falkirk

Play-offs: Partick

★ Scottish division one:

Champions — Dunfermline

Play-offs — Dundee United

Relegated — Hamilton, Dumfries

★ Scottish division two:

Champions — Stirling

Promoted — East Fife

Relegated: Montrose, Forfar

★ Scottish division three:

Champions — Livingston

Promoted — Brechin

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Dosedel beats Moya in final

MUNICH (R) — Slava Dosedel of the Czech Republic followed up a semi-final defeat of world number five Boris Becker by winning the \$25,000 Munich clay court tennis tournament on Sunday.

Dosedel, ranked 73rd in the world, scored a 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 victory over Spaniard Carlos Moya, the surprise conqueror of Austrian clay court ace Thomas Muster on Saturday.

It was the second tournament triumph of Dosedel's career and ensured a return for him to the top 50.

Moya had underlined his own credentials in the semi-finals by handing Thomas Muster his first defeat in 39 clay court matches.

But the effort took its toll on the 19-year-old whose powerful forehand drives hauled him back into the match in the second set before deserting him as the more flexible and inventive Dosedel upped the tempo in the closing stages.

Bosra Sham wins fillies' classic

NEWMARKET, England (AP) — Bosra Sham survived a lameness scare and a stewards inquiry to romp away from the field in the last 400 yards to win the fillies' 1,000 Guineas at Newmarket Sunday.

With a blacksmith down at the start in case a specially fitted shoe came loose, there were fears right down to the last seconds that the unbeaten filly might not join the other 12 starters.

But she had no problems beating a high-quality field and showed no sign of the lameness that made her such doubtful starter.

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2 TARIK HIRSHI
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q. 1 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠ J 7 ♣ A K 6 4 3 ♦ 7 5 ♠ A K J 8

The bidding has proceeded: SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass

2 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

What action do you take?

Q. 2 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠ K J 10 5 3 ♣ K Q 7 4 ♠ Q 8 2 ♠ A K

The bidding has proceeded: NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST

Pass Pass 1 ♠ Pass

2NT

What action do you take?

Q. 3 - East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠ 7 ♣ J 9 2 ♦ 7 6 3 ♠ A A Q 10 8 3 2

The bidding has proceeded: SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

Pass Pass 1 ♠ Pass

2 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

What action do you take?

Q. 4 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♠ A 10 4 ♣ A K Q J 2 ♦ J 4 ♠ A K J 8

The bidding has proceeded: SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

Pass Pass 1 ♠ Pass

2 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

What action can you take?

Q. 5 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠ A J 10 ♣ 5 6 ♠ K J 8 3 ♠ A K 10 8 4

The bidding has proceeded: WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

What action do you take?

Q. 6 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♠ J 10 3 ♣ 5 6 ♠ A 8 3 ♠ A A 7 5 4 3

As dealer, what action do you take?

Hawks squeak by Pacers, Utah survives, Bulls keep charging

INDIANAPOLIS (R) — The Atlanta Hawks won an 89-87 away-court squeaker despite the surprise return of Pacers sharpshooter Reggie Miller on Sunday to advance past Indiana into the second round of the NBA playoffs.

The cliff-hanger verdict gave the Hawks a three games to two win in their best-of-five series and lifted them into an Eastern Conference semifinal series against the Orlando Magic.

"It's a great feeling to come up here and get a win," said Atlanta backcourt hero Mookie Blaylock, who scored 23 points. "Our trademark is our defense and we stepped it up today."

The Utah Jazz also won their showdown game against the Portland, but did so in decisive fashion, clobbering the trail Blazers 102-64 at home for a 3-2 series triumph to advance to a Western Conference semifinal against the San Antonio Spurs.

Chicago, meanwhile, got off on the right foot against the New York Knicks in the opener of their best-of-seven Eastern Conference semifinal series as Michael Jordan scored 44 points to lead the Bulls to a 91-84 victory.

Miller, sidelined since surgery three weeks ago for a fracture of the orbit bone of his right eye socket, played with protective goggles and almost shot the Pacers to victory.

The long-range bomber poured in 29 points, including 16 in the fourth quarter. Miller, who said he still suffers from double vision, nearly rallied the Pacers from a five-point deficit in the final half-minute.

"I'm not superman, you know," Miller said. "I did the best I can and we almost won it. They earned it."

Blaylock came up big in the closing minutes for the Hawks, penetrating to score on a driving layup with 43 ticks left. Blaylock's bold move gave Atlanta an 89-84 lead.

Miller was then fouled by Stacey Augmon while attempting a three-pointer with 31.3 seconds remaining and converted all three free throws to pull Indiana within 89-87.

Blaylock committed a tur-



Chicago Bulls' Michael Jordan drives past New York Knicks' Hubert Davis during first half action of the Eastern Conference semifinal, May 5 at the United Centre (Reuters photo)

nover on the ensuing possession, giving Indiana the ball with 11.3 seconds left. But Pacers guard Mark Jackson had trouble setting up a final play for Indiana, finally passing to Miller in the closing seconds.

Miller, double-teamed, wriggled through to get off a desperation shot that bounced off the front of the rim.

The victory was especially sweet for Atlanta coach Lenny Wilkens, since the Hawks were eliminated from the playoffs the previous two seasons by Indiana.

In Salt Lake City, the Jazz held Portland to an all-time NBA playoff-low 64 points, including a record low of 24 points in the first half, and rolled to a 102-64 rout.

Karl Malone led the Jazz

with 25 points 10 rebounds and John Stockton had 21 points and 11 assists for the Jazz.

Arvydas Sabonis led Portland with 14 points.

In Chicago, Michael Jordan scored six of his 44 points in the final four minutes and

the Chicago Bulls held the New York Knicks without a field goal over the final five minutes for a 91-84 win in game one of their conference semifinal series.

Jordan made 17-of-35 shots and was 9-of-9 from the free throw line.

Sunday's playoff results

Eastern Conference quarter-finals

Atlanta 89 Indiana 87

(Atlanta wins best-of-five series 3-2)

Eastern Conference semifinals

Chicago 91 New York 84

(Chicago leads best-of-seven series 1-0)

Western Conference quarter-finals

Utah 102 Portland 64

(Utah wins best-of-five series 3-2)

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Netanyahu to propose 'unity' cabinet

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu will propose a government of national unity between his Likud Party and Labour of Prime Minister Shimon Peres just before May 29 elections, the daily Yediot Aharonot said Monday.

The paper said Mr. Netanyahu will make the move to reassure wavering voters and counterbalance known hardliners within his ranks such as former defence minister Ariel Sharon and former chief of staff Raphael Eytan.

In the 1984 elections then Likud leader Yitzhak Shamir also proposed a government of national unity at the last minute when his party was trailing Labour in the polls.

Labour and Likud eventually tied in those elections and the plan for a joint cabinet went ahead.

Likud campaign manager Limor Livnat refused to confirm or deny the report in Yediot. Israel's highest circulation daily paper.

In a separate press report Mr. Netanyahu's party was shown to be behind Labour in moves to court Russian immigrants in the polls when Israel will for the first time directly elect their prime minister as well as deputies to the 120-seat Knesset.

In the race for prime minister, Mr. Peres was given 50.4 per cent and Mr. Netanyahu 40.30 in the poll of 802 Russian immigrants, who have arrived in the Jewish state since 1989, published in the Russian language newspaper Vesti. A further 9.3 per cent said they were undecided.

But 37.3 per cent of those polled pledged to vote for the Russian immigrant party "Israel be Alys" led by former Soviet dissident Anatole Sharansky in the vote to elect the parliamentary deputies, with 23.7 pledging support to Likud and 20.9 to Labour.

Parties representing the Jewish state's 600,000 immigrants were not given a man-

(Continued on page 7)



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Monday addresses a European Union delegation headed by Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli at Umm Qais (Petra photo)

EU must cooperate with U.S. for peace — Agnelli

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli said Monday that the European Union (EU) must coordinate with the United States in efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East.

"The EU is determined to contribute to efforts to advance the peace process but we must coordinate our action with the United States," Ms. Agnelli said after talks here with Lebanese Foreign Minister Fares Bouez.

Ms. Agnelli, who arrived here from Jordan on the third and last leg of a regional tour which also took her to Egypt, ruled out EU sanctions against Israel over its assault against Lebanon.

"I don't think we will take measures against Israel. We are not here to impose sanctions," she said.

Ms. Agnelli shuttled between Lebanon, Syria and Israel last month as part of an international drive to broker a truce in South Lebanon between Israel and Hizbollah guerrillas.

She criticised the 16-day Israeli offensive which killed 200 people in South Lebanon, virtually all civilians, and ended on April 27 with a U.S. and French-brokered ceasefire.

She told reporters that Mr.

Bouez spoke of "differences between France and the United States over the modalities of a truce monitoring committee" and that the Lebanese official would be travelling to Damascus to discuss the issue.

The truce calls for the creation of a monitoring committee comprising France, Israel, Lebanon, Syria and the United States.

Ms. Agnelli also met Lebanese President Elias Hrawi, Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri and Prime Minister Rafik Hariri before a luncheon with Mr. Bouez and her flight back home.

Mr. Hariri was due in Rome on Tuesday for a 24-hour visit ahead of trips to Belgium and France, state-run television said.

Agnelli visits Umm Qais

Before her departure from Jordan earlier Monday, Ms. Agnelli was taken to Umm Qais by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and was briefed on the importance of Umm Qais and water and irrigation projects being carried out in the region.

Munther Haddadin, a senior member of the Jordanian delegation to the peace process, outlined water nego-

tiations with Israel. Jordan's rights acquired through the October 1994 peace treaty and a water conference to be held in Amman next year.

The Regent stressed the need for regional and international efforts in reconstructing Middle East economies, pointing out that the European role in financing projects and developing the Jordan Rift Valley was quite important.

Prince Hassan also underlined the need to solve water issues in the whole region to preempt any future conflicts.

During her visit to Jordan, Ms. Agnelli also announced that the EU had agreed a \$130 million grant to Jordan for the current financial year to help it meet its budget deficit.

Jordan and the EU are engaged in talks towards sealing a partnership agreement by next June which will make the Kingdom eligible for EU grants and loans over the next five years. Amman is hoping to win a large share of \$12 billion allocated by the EU for Mediterranean countries.

The recent grant is on top of a \$150 million aid package earmarked by the EU for Jordan under a five-year cooperation protocol which expires in June 1996.

Israeli forces hold relatives of two 'missing' militants

DAHARIYEH (AFP) — Israeli police swept through this refugee camp near Hebron overnight, arresting relatives of two young Palestinians reported missing since Friday and who authorities fear may be planning suicide attacks in Israel, Palestinian sources said Monday.

An Israeli army spokesman said only that 11 Palestinians suspected of "belonging to or aiding hostile organisations" had been detained in Dahariyeh overnight.

The description is the military's term for presumed members of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) or Islamic Jihad, the groups which carried out a spate of suicide bombings in Israel earlier this year.

But Palestinian sources said 14 people were arrested, mostly relatives of Majed Al Kassasbeh and Sadek Hamad Al Tel, both 20, who have been the target of a manhunt by both Israeli and Palestinian security forces since their families reported them missing.

The two, who served prison sentences in Israel last year for their activities in Hamas, have not been seen since Friday, relatives said.

According to Hamas ritual, would-be suicide bombers retreat during Friday prayers to "purify" themselves before carrying out anti-Israeli attacks.

Israeli security services have warned of planned attacks by militants in the run-up to May 29 Israeli general elections.

The army also reported the arrests Monday of three other suspected militants near the northern city of Nablus and the town of Tul-karem.

Israel has arrested several hundred Hamas and Islamic Jihad members since four suicide bombings killed 59 people plus the bombers between February 25 and March 4.

Two of the bombings were carried out by young men from Al Fawwar, another refugee camp near Hebron. Both those men went missing Friday before the carried out their attacks on Sunday, Feb. 25.

Meanwhile, witnesses said Israeli moved men and equipment from its central military headquarters in Hebron on Monday in continuing prepa-

rations for the facility's delayed handover to Palestinian rule. A token Israeli force remained at the site.

Israel was to make a partial pullout from Hebron on March 28 but froze the move in the wake of the bombings. It has still to set a redeployment date.

Prime Minister Shimon Peres has warned of threats of more attacks, saying they could even take place on May 29, election day. The last wave of bombings wiped out a substantial Peres opinion poll lead over his right-wing rival Benjamin Netanyahu.

Mr. Peres now leads by five percentage points.

Mr. Peres, who froze peace moves demanding Palestinian President Yasser Arafat curb militants, had said recently Israel would go forward with the Hebron redeployment but he has angered his Palestinian peace partners by not yet setting a date.

On Monday, Israeli soldiers moved equipment from the Hebron military headquarters and slapped a fresh coat of paint of the building. Witnesses said seven lorries

(Continued on page 7)

Fundamentalism not inevitable — Hassan II

PARIS (R) — King Hassan of Morocco, assured of a warm welcome on Monday on his first state visit to Paris in more than a decade, told French leaders anxious at instability in North Africa that Muslim fundamentalism was not inevitable.

In an interview published hours before he arrived for two days of talks and red-carpet receptions, the veteran monarch told the daily Le Parisien: "There is nothing inevitable about fundamentalism."

"The surest response to the fundamentalist drift is freedom, a judicious education and a fair balance between respect and protection of (Muslims) identity and the necessary achievements of modernity," he said.

Conservative French President Jacques Chirac has worked hard since taking office a year ago to bolster Morocco and Tunisia as twin ramparts against extremism racking neighbouring Algeria, amid fears of a flood of immigrants from former North African colonies.

That aim has led him to turn a blind eye to both countries' human rights record and limited democracy, in contrast to his socialist prede-

cessor, Francois Mitterrand.

France-Moroccan relations were severely strained in the early 1990s when King Hassan was angered by Mr. Mitterrand's declared policy of conditioning aid to former colonies on progress in democracy and human rights.

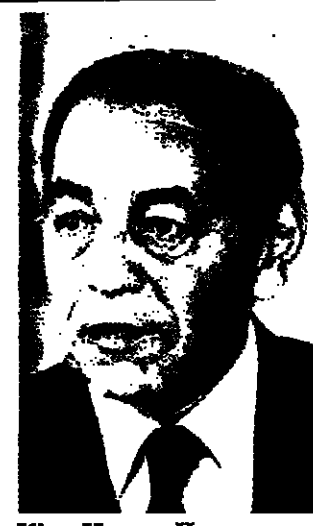
Ties reached a low ebb in 1991 with the publication of a highly critical book "Notre ami le roi" (our friend the king) by author Gilles Perault, which epitomised the French left's distaste for King Hassan's personal rule.

But worsening bloodshed in Algeria since the army intervened in 1992 to prevent the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) winning a general election led to a reassessment in Paris of the value of Morocco and its enduring ruler.

Mr. Chirac, a personal friend of King Hassan, made his first state visit to Morocco last year, earning a tumultuous welcome.

The king had been due to return the visit last November but the trip was postponed after he was taken to hospital with pneumonia, raising concern about the stability of a country so dependent on its 66-year-old sovereign.

In a speech defining



King Hassan II

France's "Arab policy" last month, Mr. Chirac said attachment to human rights and liberty "must not prevent us from recognising that these values can be expressed in different forms in our respective cultures and traditions."

The king has made some gestures on human rights by freeing prominent political prisoners and demolishing the notorious Tazmamart prison where some were held in squalid conditions.

However, he has rejected demands that he remove Driss Bassi, the opposition's key condition for joining a coalition government.

Arafat to unveil cabinet tomorrow

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Yasser Arafat is expected to unveil his new self-rule cabinet on Wednesday when the Palestinian legislature meets in the Gaza town of Rafah, senior Palestinian officials said Monday.

"It is most likely that Arafat will present his government Wednesday to the legislative council and to other representative bodies," Nabil Abu Rudeina, a top Arafat aide, told AFP.

The legislative council, elected on Jan. 20, is due to meet Wednesday and Thursday in Rafah, in the far south of the Gaza Strip.

Mr. Rudeina said the cabinet would retain most of the current 18 ministers in the autonomy government known as the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) plus "some new members from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) executive committee and the new legislative council and some independents."

Palestinian sources said the new cabinet would have around 25 members.

Seminar ends with call for better media action

AMMAN (I.T.) — A seminar entitled "Media and Information — Realities and Prospects" ended on Monday with participants calling for upgrading media performance and praising the achievements of Jordan in this regard.

A working paper presented to the meeting by Nader Hourani, deputy general manager of the Jordan Press Foundation, reviewed the development of the Jordanian press since 1920 and the government's involvement in the emergence of newspapers and magazines.

Mr. Hourani said that the major press institutions in Jordan had mustered most of the elements needed for success in terms of equipment, staff, computers, technical know-how and other facilities and requirements as well as spacious premises.

But, he said, these institutions have been mobilising efforts for the production of a single newspaper or two at the most, and so the local market still lacks specialised magazines and newspapers dealing with art, science, literature, industry or politics, forcing readers to rely on imported magazines to satisfy their needs.

Furthermore, he said the present press institutions lack essential and appropriate

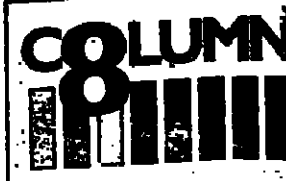
tools to help them with their work like information and studies centres, journalists training centres, etc.

The government's involvement in the work of the newspapers, Mr. Hourani said started in the early 1960s when the private sector then shunned establishing a major press foundation due to its high cost and doubts over its success.

He said the last time the government involved itself in the press was in 1986 when it transformed the existing individually-managed dailies into public share-holding companies with government institutions holding major equities in them.

However, the recent Law on Press and Publications stipulates that the government could not acquire more than 30 per cent of any press institution's capital. The government has declared that it will cancel the Ministry of Information to give way to the private sector to run the information and media services in Jordan, he noted.

Mr. Hourani said these steps give the impression that the government was also paving the way for the private sector to contribute more and have the most dominant role in the management and publication of the press.



Man bites dog

CAIRO (AFP) — An Egyptian thief sunk his teeth into a German shepherd dog he had stolen in a vain attempt to stop it barking, the Egyptian daily Al-Ahram reported Monday. Ahmed Said, 22, intended to sell the guard dog which he stole from the house of a lawyer in Mansura, 130 kilometres north of Cairo. After pacifying the dog by feeding it biscuits laced with drugs, Said and two accomplices put a muzzle on it and took it back to his house. But when the dog woke up it started to bark, sending his kidnapper into a towering rage which led him to bite the dog's ears, said the paper. The three villains were arrested, and the dog was returned to its owner with its ears in bandages. "The animal had tears in its eyes, as if it was railing against the wretchedness of the human race," said Al-Ahram.

China firm seeks wives for male staff

HONG KONG (R) — Lonely hearts don't need marriage bureaux — a Chinese company has been seeking out sweethearts for thousands of male staff, a newspaper said Monday.

The company, the Fourth Navigational Engineering Enterprise, a unit of the Ministry of Communications, boasted about the pedigree of its male employees in an advertisement for brides in Chinese magazines, the Apple Daily reported. "Our organisation is a big integrated construction firm. Our employees have salaries and fringe benefits including housing. Every year a big batch of graduates are sent to work at our unit... Quite a number are so devoted to work they rarely think of the big personal issue of marriage," the advert said.

"Now friends wanted: Unmarried Guangzhou women of 22 to 28 years, with an education standard of high school or above, plus good behaviour and good looks," it said. The unit, in the southern China city of Guangzhou, employed more than 3,800 men and only 463 women under 35. Some male staff, especially engineers, need to travel. The enterprise had searched in vain for spouses for them at organisations that employed lots of women, such as hospitals. This failed and eventually it decided to advertise. It received 200 replies, not only from would-be brides but also from fathers eager to marry off their daughters. They flocked to the firm to register as their daughters waited shyly outside. Five male employees had tied the knot as a result and the enterprise was pressing ahead to make more matches, the paper said.

Tourists get chance to climb Sydney Harbour Bridge

SYDNEY (R) Tourists wearing protective suits and safety harness will be able to climb the Sydney Harbour Bridge's steel span, 147 metres above the water, for the first time since construction in 1932. Michael Knight, roads minister responsible for the bridge in the state of New South Wales, said tours of the famous bridge would rate with climbing the Eiffel Tower in Paris, the Statue of Liberty in New York and the Tower Bridge in London. "Since its opening over 60 years ago, only a limited number of people have had the opportunity to walk the arches," Mr. Knight said in a statement received Monday. "That will all change soon with regular tours for Sydneysiders and tourists."

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Aqaba Region Authority



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SOUTH COAST ZONE OF AQABA (RESTAURANTS AND COFFEE SHOPS WITH SWIMMING POOLS)

The Aqaba Region Authority announces the above investment opportunities in the area of Ras Al-Yamaniyya in the South Coast Zone of Aqaba.

Several plots ranging from (4,000 to 11,000) square metres, west of the Scenic Coastal Road, have been allocated for restaurants and coffee shops with swimming pools as tourist attractions.

Interested investors are asked to contact Aqaba Region Authority — The Investment Unit, for more detailed information about lease conditions for these sites during working hours not later than Saturday 25/5/1996.

Prof. Dr. Fayez Khasawneh
President
Aqaba Region Authority

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In English

in both

Al Ra'i & the Jordan Times

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